

Chapter 1 : IVF with own eggs @ Your IVF Journey

Since the Czech Republic is a democratic republic, journalists and media enjoy a great degree of freedom. There are restrictions only against writing in support of Nazism, racism or violating Czech law.

Understand[edit] The Czech Republic is not a geographical large country, but it has a rich and eventful history. For centuries they jointly cultivated their land, creating works that still command respect and admiration today. It is thanks to their inventiveness and skill that this small country is graced with hundreds of ancient castles, monasteries and stately mansions, and even entire towns that give the impression of being comprehensive artifacts. The Czech Republic contains a vast amount of architectural treasure, as well as beautiful forests and mountains to match. History[edit] The contemporary Czech lands were originally inhabited by the Boii, a Celtic tribe for the first four centuries of the common era. After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Celts gave way to Germanic tribes. Another four centuries later, Slavs arrived from the east, and by the 9th century, had established the Great Moravian Empire, stretching from modern-day Germany to Ukraine. After the fall of Great Moravia, the Lands of the Bohemian Crown was formed, whose borders for most of its history remain nearly identical to contemporary Czech borders. From the 11th to the 14th century, massive ethnic German colonization, known in German as the Ostsiedlung, occurred in the then-underpopulated borders of the kingdom. Under his enlightened and largely peaceful reign, royal investment into Czech institutions, culture, education, and infrastructure received royal patronage. The rise of Jan Hus and his Hussite followers in the s violently rejected the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Church, sparking a series of Hussite Wars that lasted until the s, placing Czech proto-Protestant peasants and sympathetic lords against crusading Catholic armies. Defeated and humiliated at the Battle of White Mountain in , the Czechs endured a strong Habsburg imperial occupation and forced Catholicization for decades to come. Despite the occupation, the Czech lands prospered under Austria, with Baroque palaces and buildings spreading across the kingdom throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. The Czech lands became one of the first to industrialize by the 19th century, rising to one of the most economically advanced parts of the empire. At the same time, the Czech National Revival spurred nationalist and pan-Slavic feelings among the populace, which resulted in a cultural backlash against Austrian Germanization. Prague Castle and the Charles Bridge. Shortly before the end of World War I and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the closely-related Slavic nations of Czechs and Slovaks declared their independence, merging together to form the new state of Czechoslovakia on 28 October Highly industrialized and pragmatic, the First Republic acted as an island of stability, facing off threats from a revanchist Poland to the north, politically unstable Austria and Weimar Germany to the south and west, and an irredentist Hungary to the southeast. The First Republic culturally and economically flourished during this period, and is often considered as another golden era by many modern Czechs. A year later in March , Nazi Germany occupied the remaining rump Czech lands and declared it a protectorate of the Third Reich, while Slovakia was forced to secede as a puppet state. A major event during the occupation was the complete destruction of the village of Lidice, located 22 km 14 mi northwest of Prague, in reprisal for the assassination of Reich Protector Reinhard Heydrich by British-trained Czechoslovak paratroopers. The country miraculously emerged from the conflict more or less intact as it avoided the air bombardments and pitched battles that reduced its neighbouring states to ruins. However, the country fell within the Soviet sphere of influence, with the Czechoslovak Communist Party staging a coup in February , toppling its democratic government. Mass anti-Soviet demonstrations in the following year ushered in the Normalization era Normalizace , a period of harsh repression and conservatism. In November , in the wake of elections in Poland , protests in Hungary , and the collapse of the Berlin Wall nearby in Germany , the totalitarian lid could no longer be held. Growing popular discontent and the brutal actions of the state police spilled over into mass demonstrations that helped topple the communists peacefully, in an event known as the Velvet Revolution. A democratic federal government was quickly installed. At the stroke of midnight on 1 January , Czechoslovakia peacefully dissolved upon an agreement between Czech bureaucrats and Slovak nationalists in the Velvet Divorce, becoming the new states of the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The Czech

flag is the same one formerly used by Czechoslovakia, originally adopted in Spas and apartments in Karlovy Vary. Celebration of the New Year and the splitting of Czechoslovakia. Most businesses are closed, with most staying indoors with their families. A day of church services for the faithful, although most Czechs take the opportunity to start a four-day Easter weekend. Some businesses will be closed or with irregular hours. Easter Velikonoce , Easter Monday: In areas close to the Slovak border in Moravia, it is also common to douse women with cold water. Obviously tourists are often but not always exempt. On the last April evening, bonfires are lit around the country. This is the reinterpretation of the old pagan festival Beltane, influenced by the Catholic inquisition. As some Czechs prefer witches over the inquisitors, in many fires no witches are burnt, and the feast is celebrated in a more original pagan way - witches are those who should celebrate the night, not be burnt. This is a cultural holiday, and not a public one. Celebration of workers rights and struggles. Once an enormous affair during communism, since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, May Day is now largely a quiet day of rest and barbeques, with only some small political gatherings by social democrats or unrepentant communists. A public holiday with most businesses closed. Commemoration of the defeat of Nazi Germany. Traditional celebration of the end of the last year at high school, usually a week or more before maturity the final exam takes place. Students get a free day and usually do silly things in costumes, sometimes going into the streets to collect money from people passing by, sometimes threatening them with water, writing on their faces with lipstick, or spraying them with perfume. The collected money is used for parties after the exams. Celebration of proto-Protestant religious agitator Jan Hus. The Czech Silesian city of Opava during Christmas. A public holiday with many businesses closed. Commemoration of the start of the Velvet Revolution and the collapse of the Czechoslovak communist state, marked normally by political speeches and marches. Nicholas, Santa Claus , 5 December: Old Town Square in Prague is a great place to watch the festivities. Strictly a cultural holiday. Czechs begin celebrating this holiday on Christmas Eve and continue to celebrate until the 26th the Feast of Stephen. Potato salad with carp is the traditional Christmas meal, and for this reason one can see live carp being sold out of huge tanks throughout the streets of Czech cities and towns just before Christmas. And no, Bohemian Rhapsody its lyrics sprinkled with Italian and Arabic is not a local anthem! The words Bohemia and Bohemian originate from the Boii Celtic tribe. The term Bohemian had ended up meaning more or less Czech by the end of the 19th century with the awakening of pan-Slavic nationalism. However, it was also used to refer to any inhabitant of Bohemia, including the vast number of Sudeten Germans that used to inhabit the region until Moravia and Czech Silesia[edit] Olomouc , the historic capital of Moravia. Despite this history, Moravia did not experience the process of mass urbanisation as in neighboring Bohemia. As a result, Moravia is still home to gorgeous vineyards, orchards, fields of organic produce, scenic mountain vistas, and a landscape dotted with sleepy villages. Even the regional capital and its largest city, Brno , remains known for its small town atmosphere. Culturally, Moravians prefer a slower pace of life than Bohemians, with some Moravians confessing to have stronger affinities with Slovakia than with Bohemia. The dialects of Czech spoken in Moravia are slightly different from those spoken in neighboring Bohemia, particularly in Prague. Czech Silesia to the very east is often regarded as the heavy industrial center of the republic, known extensively for its coal mines and steel mills, with Ostrava as its largest city and cultural center, and Opava as its historical capital. The region is known also for its extensive cross-border cultural connections with Polish Silesia , whose industrial economy and historical experience is similar, along with many families split by the border. There is also a fairly significant Polish minority near the border, although they have, for all intents and purposes, fully integrated into Czech society. Silesian dialects are also markedly different from those found elsewhere in the country, often being characterized as being short, gruff, and to the point according to Bohemians and Moravians. Regions[edit] The Czech Republic has 14 political regions kraj which can be grouped together into eight general regions: Regions of Czech Republic.

Chapter 2 : Prague Best of Prague, Czech Republic Tourism - TripAdvisor

Day Czech Republic Itinerary: Prague Day 1: Arrival in Prague, Czech Republic. Public transportation is the best way to get around Prague, so I recommend taking over your rental car on the morning of day 3 when you are heading out of the city.

Cheap eats in the Czech Republic Getting to and around the Czech Republic There are a number of low budget airlines that fly into Prague from all around Europe. Additionally, you can take advantage of its central location and catch a bus or a train within a few hours from Munich, Berlin, Vienna, or Bratislava. You can also use a budget bus line like Flix to explore the Czech Republic. The roads are modern and the railway links are excellent. With car rentals, you can expect any highway tolls to be prepaid and petrol costs are similar rates to neighboring countries. Budget hotels in the Czech Republic Although not as quite as cheap as they used to be, hotels in the Czech Republic are still an incredible bargain, especially when compared to other major European destinations. Looking for some suggestions? Stay at one of our favorite budget hotels in Prague. Exploring the Czech Republic The Czech Republic features several beautiful and fascinating destinations which have something to offer to just about everybody. Here are a few of our favorite suggestions of places to visit which cover the highlights of the country for most travelers: Stroll across the historic Charles Bridge in Prague. Gilbert Prague The unforgettable, unmissable, Golden City. This is a place that most travelers fall in love with at first sight and will come back to visit again and again. You are bound to discover your own route which features amazing historical architecture, great old style pubs, and wonderful museums. Brno Not often visited by travelers in the past, this second city of the Czech Republic is gaining a reputation as a necessary stopover between Prague and its neighboring capital cities such as Vienna , Bratislava , and Budapest. Combining a revitalized downtown full of stunning squares and churches, and a hot new culinary scene, as well as an authentic culture that holds onto its roots as a hard-partying student city, it can be a great experience to spend a couple days here. As an added bonus, Brno is nearby the Moravian wine country, an area that offers gorgeous nature and cheap, tasty wine in a friendly locale. The quaint streets of Karlovy Vary. Now eight centuries later, Karlovy Vary is still a top destination thanks to its beautiful spas as well as its stunning historical town center full of restaurants, cafes, and parks. Search more than hotels in Karlovy Vary Cesky Krumlov The magical fairytale city of Cesky Krumlov is a highlight for many visitors. As an added bonus the old town is encircled by a river which shoots out to the nearby forest, giving you the opportunity to rent a canoe and float through the natural beauty of the region for a few hours, stopping for beer and grilled food at riverside restaurants along the way. Set in a forested nature preserve only 90 kilometers northeast of Prague, this area offers activities for outdoor adventurers such as hiking, cycling, rafting, and climbing. Stay in a guest house, private apartment, or go camping. A typical Czech dish at lunchtime. With beer, of course! Cheap eats in the Czech Republic Order the set lunch menu One of the great values to be found in all of Europe is lunchtime in the Czech Republic. Nearly every restaurant offers a set menu Monday through Friday. When in Prague you can choose pretty much any cuisine you want €” classic Czech dishes, Vietnamese, Mexican, burgers, Indian, or vegetarian. Expect an unadorned, heaping portion of roast pork, goulash, or fried schnitzel, accompanied by a mountain of potatoes or dumplings. During your stay in Prague, follow these tips to save on your restaurant bill. Shop at farmers markets In the cities throughout the country you can expect to find a farmers market operating at least once per week, but in Prague, they happen nearly every day. Grab a few items, find a comfortable park bench and enjoy a picnic! And did we mention the amazing beer gardens in Prague? Start with the undisputed king of Czech beer Pilsner Urquell and then sample the other local brands to find the one which suits you best. For the perfect souvenir, bring home a Czech beer coaster. Tell us in the comments below! Living in Prague but spending winters in the warm southern confines of Italy and Spain, he cobbles together a living writing about the beautiful places he visits and working as an "expert" in international relocation for recently arrived expats in Europe. You can DM him on his Instagram account to discuss cooperation on any writing project or to tell him what you really think about his writing and photography.

Chapter 3 : THE 10 BEST Czech Republic Monuments & Statues (with Photos) - TripAdvisor

The Czech Embassy website has more information on what medications can be brought to the Czech Republic. Make sure your health insurance plan provides coverage overseas. You must have sufficient health insurance to enter Schengen countries.

The kingdom was a significant regional power during the Middle Ages. The bull declared that the King of Bohemia would be exempt from all future obligations to the Holy Roman Empire except for participation in imperial councils. German immigrants settled in the Bohemian periphery in the 13th century. Germans populated towns and mining districts and, in some cases, formed German colonies in the interior of Bohemia. In 1279, the Mongols launched an invasion of Europe. After the Battle of Legnica in Poland, the Mongols carried their raids into Moravia, but were defensively defeated at the fortified town of Olomouc. He built a great empire stretching from the Danube river to the Baltic Sea. After a series of dynastic wars, the House of Luxembourg gained the Bohemian throne. Much of Prague Castle and the cathedral of Saint Vitus in Gothic style were completed during his reign. He unified Brandenburg until 1309, Lusatia until 1327, and Silesia until 1328 under the Bohemian crown. The Czech lands were part of the Empire in 1306, and Prague was the imperial seat in 1308 and 1309. Bohemian Reformation started around by Jan Hus. Hussite George of Podebrady was even a king. The Austrian Habsburgs of the 16th century, the founders of the central European Habsburg Monarchy, were buried in Prague. The leaders of the Bohemian Revolt were executed in 1621. The nobility and the middle class Protestants had to either convert to Catholicism or leave the country. The population of the Czech lands declined by a third through the expulsion of Czech Protestants as well as due to the war, disease and famine. Ottoman Turks and Tatars invaded Moravia in 1682. In 1741 the Prussians invaded Bohemia and after the Battle of Prague occupied the city. More than one quarter of Prague was destroyed and St. Vitus Cathedral also suffered heavy damage. In 1770 and Great Famine killed about one tenth of the Czech population, or 1,000,000 inhabitants, and radicalised the countryside leading to peasant uprisings. Joseph Radetzky von Radetz, born to a noble Czech family, was a field marshal and chief of the general staff of the Austrian Empire army during these wars. The end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 led to degradation of the political status of the Kingdom of Bohemia. Bohemia lost its position of an electorate of the Holy Roman Empire as well as its own political representation in the Imperial Diet. During the 18th and 19th century the Czech National Revival began its rise, with the purpose to revive Czech language, culture and national identity. The Revolution of 1848 in Prague, striving for liberal reforms and autonomy of the Bohemian Crown within the Austrian Empire, was suppressed. The Austrian Empire needed to redefine itself to maintain unity in the face of nationalism. At first it seemed that some concessions would be made also to Bohemia, but in the end the Emperor Franz Joseph I effected a compromise with Hungary only. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 and the never realized coronation of Franz Joseph as King of Bohemia led to a huge disappointment of Czech politicians. The first elections under universal male suffrage were held in 1905. Although the majority of Czech soldiers fought for the Austro-Hungarian Empire, more than 90,000 Czech volunteers formed the Czechoslovak Legions in France, Italy and Russia, where they fought against the Central Powers and later against Bolshevik troops. In 1928 Czechoslovakia held a 10th place in the world industrial production. The effects of the Great Depression including high unemployment and massive propaganda from Nazi Germany, however, resulted in discontent and strong support among ethnic Germans for a break from Czechoslovakia.

Chapter 4 : Most Czechs don't believe in God

Less than one in ten people living in the Czech Republic (7%) were born elsewhere, far below the OECD average (13%), and 48% of them are women (51% for the OECD average). Migrants in the Czech Republic are.

Czechia is a party to the Schengen Agreement. Passports should be valid for at least six months beyond the arrival date into Schengen, to avoid difficulties entering and traveling within the Schengen zone. For additional details about travel into and within Schengen countries, please see our Schengen fact sheet. You may enter the Czech Republic for up to 90 days for tourist, business, study and most other purposes except work without a visa. This is counted along with presence in all Schengen countries for up to 90 days out of any day period. You will need a visa for longer stays or to work for any period of time in the Czech Republic. When a visa is required, submit your application to the nearest Czech diplomatic mission at least months in advance of traveling to the Czech Republic. Embassy cannot help speed up foreign visa applications. You must also carry proof of a valid medical insurance policy contracted for payment of all costs for hospitalization and medical treatment while in the Czech Republic. Safety and Security Credible information indicates terrorist groups continue plotting possible attacks in Europe. European governments are taking action to guard against terrorist attacks; however, all European countries remain potentially vulnerable to attacks from transnational terrorist organizations. Strikes and Demonstrations do occur in the Czech Republic, and authorities are generally well-prepared and handle disruptions in a professional manner. Protect your security, avoid demonstrations whenever possible, and bear in mind that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful may turn violent. The Czech Republic generally has little crime. However, you should still take precautions against becoming a victim of crime. Criminals operate in professional, highly organized groups and may be armed with simple weapons, so avoid direct confrontation. Do not leave your belongings unattended. Use caution when accepting open drinks at bars or clubs, and do not leave drinks unattended. Refusal to pay may lead to a court procedure and an even higher fine. Streetcars have the right of way over pedestrians at crosswalks. Casinos and gaming establishments are government-regulated, but some have been affiliated with, or attracted the interest of, organized crime. Conduct currency exchanges at reputable banks or legitimate money kiosks. Pay close attention to the exact rate offered for the amount you wish to exchange, as rates may vary widely for smaller versus larger amounts and between different exchange offices. An offer to exchange currency by an unknown person on the street is most likely a scam. ATMs are widely available throughout major cities. Use ATMs at secure, monitored locations commercial banks, large hotels, and the airport. Auto thefts and break-ins are common in the Czech Republic, especially in major cities. Use parking garages and anti-theft devices. Verify charges paid with credit card are correct before signing for purchases, keep all receipts, and check your credit card accounts online to ensure correct billing. Report crimes to the local police by dialing , and contact the U. Remember that local authorities are responsible for investigating and prosecuting the crime.

The economy of the Czech Republic, on the other hand, was relatively diversified and stable, reflecting both a more amenable geography and the historic predominance of Czechs in the federal administration.

See Article History Alternative Titles: It is roughly coextensive with the historic region of Slovakia, the easternmost of the two territories that from to constituted Czechoslovakia. Of course, the history of the Slovak nation began long before the creation of Czechoslovakia and even before the emergence of Slovak as a distinct literary language in the 19th century. Only in , when World War I ended with Austria-Hungary on the losing side, did Slovakia materialize as a geopolitical unit—but within the new country of Czechoslovakia. Although a critical stocktaking of the Czech-Slovak relationship shows more discord than harmony, there was one splendid moment when the two nations stood firmly together. Today Slovakia has become increasingly infiltrated by modern industrial infrastructure , but it still offers breathtaking views of wine-growing valleys, picturesque castles, and historical cities. Land Slovakia is bordered by Poland to the north, Ukraine to the east, Hungary to the south, and Austria to the southwest. Its former federal partner, the Czech Republic , lies to the west. They consist of a system of three regions of east-west-trending ranges—Outer, Central, and Inner—separated by valleys and intermontane basins. Flows vary seasonally from the torrents of spring snowmelt to late-summer lows. Mountain lakes and mineral and thermal springs are numerous. The Danube River at Bratislava, Slovakia. The upper reaches of the southern river valleys are covered with brown forest soils, while podzols dominate the central and northern areas of middle elevation. Stony mountain soils cover the highest regions. Its mountainous terrain is another determining factor. The growing season is about days in the south and less than half of that in the mountains. Annual precipitation ranges from about 22 inches mm in the Danubian plains to more than 43 inches 1, mm in windward mountain valleys. Maximum precipitation falls in July, while the minimum is in January. Snow remains on the higher peaks into the summer months. Plant and animal life Although Slovakia is a small country, its varied topography supports a wide variety of vegetation. Forestland is most extensive in the mountainous districts. The highest elevations support taiga and tundra vegetation. The timberline runs at about 5, feet 1, metres. At these upper elevations, particularly in the Tatras, the tree cover below the timberline consists largely of dwarf pine. At about 7, feet 2, metres , alpine grasses and low-growing shrubs give way to lichens. Hunting is prohibited in the parks, and some animals, such as the chamois, are protected nationwide. The forests and lowland areas support numerous game birds, such as partridges, pheasants, wild geese, and ducks. Raptors, storks, and other large birds are protected. Small numbers of Czechs, Germans, and Poles live throughout the country, while Ruthenians Rusyns are concentrated in the east and northeast. There is a sizable and relatively mobile population of Roma Gypsies , who live mainly in the eastern part of the country. Widespread fluency in Czech is a legacy of the period of federation. As members of the West Slavic language group, Slovak and Czech are closely related and mutually intelligible; both use the Roman rather than the Cyrillic alphabet. Croatian speakers, living in a small number of villages in western Slovakia, make up a tiny linguistic minority. Religion Four decades of official atheism ended with the collapse of communist control in , and the widespread persistence of religious affiliation quickly manifested itself in both the sectarian and political spheres. More than one-tenth of the population professes no religious belief. Rural settlements with up to several hundred inhabitants tend to prevail except in the more heavily urbanized southwest. Highland villages, many of them dating from the Middle Ages, conform to linear ridges and valleys. Historically, Turkish invasions from the south, lasting up to the 18th century, forced much of the population to resettle farther north. Dispersed settlement occurs along the Czech border and in the central mountains, reflecting the later colonization of the 17th and 18th centuries. Reprivatization of farmland following the Velvet Revolution of effected a gradual reconfiguration of the arable landscape. Well over half a million Slovaks emigrated to the United States prior to During communist rule, emigration virtually stopped, but industrialization policies were responsible for significant internal migration. Slovak political autonomy was a popular idea, but many Slovaks viewed the pursuit of it outside the relative security of a Czechoslovak federation as potentially disastrous. Others argued that the conversion

to a market economy in a federated Czechoslovakia would favour the Czech region. Indeed, the process of privatization undertaken after the fall of the communist regime in had proceeded much more slowly in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic. The apportionment of government assets posed another vexing challenge at the time of separation. Primary among these were the former Czechoslovak military facilities. The majority of army bases, aircraft, and associated equipment remained on Czech soil, where the frontiers with western Europe had been more heavily protected. The complexities of partition aside, both the Czech and Slovak economies felt the drag of economic downturns in the early s. Acceleration of the privatization program was viewed as the most promising means of increasing foreign investment. The cancellation was declared unconstitutional, and in July the government instituted a program called the National Property Fund, whereby citizens would receive bonds that could be redeemed for shares in privatized industries. Initially, the engineers of the political separation of Czechoslovakia had assumed that the nascent economies of the two independent republics could share, for a limited period, the existing monetary system. Such an arrangement quickly came to be perceived as untenable: The short-lived plan that finally emergedâ€”in an atmosphere rife with rumour, denial, false starts, and delaysâ€”prescribed a stepped transition in which each republic would recall a portion of its Czechoslovak currency supply for stamping with a country mark, and then newly printed bills would gradually replace the stamped ones. The agreement established an initial exchange rate of 1 to 1 for the new currencies, known as koruny, but the Slovak koruna soon became less valuable than the Czech koruna. Following its entry into the European Union EU in , however, Slovakia became the first of the two countries to replace its currency with the euro , which it adopted in . Although Slovakia started the process of transforming its economy in less-favourable circumstances than the Czech Republic, on average Slovakia achieved greater economic growth and lower inflation rates than its Czech counterpart. A key feature of growth was the burgeoning service sector, which provided employment to about half the labour force. Nevertheless, during the s unemployment remained rather high, and inflation inched upward. However, by , when Slovakia joined the EU, the economy had expanded, inflation had fallen substantially, the current account deficit had shrunk, and foreign investment in the country had greatly risen. On the fertile lowlands, wheat, barley, sugar beets, corn maize , and fodder crops are the most important crops, whereas on the relatively poor soils of the mountains the principal crops are rye, oats, potatoes, and flax. On the plains, farmers raise pigs and cattle. Sheep raising is prevalent in mountain valleys. The brown coal has been used in thermal power stations, as fuel in the home, and as raw material in the chemical industry. Pipelines import Russian oil to a major refinery at Bratislava and natural gas , the latter supplementing existing coal gas supplies. In the 21st century Slovakia added pipelines to Austria, the Czech Republic, and Hungary, a diversification of supply that took on additional import in the wake of the crisis in Ukraine in . Natural gas began to be extracted near the western town of Gbely in . Substantial deposits of iron ore, copper, manganese, magnesite, lead, and zinc are mined in the Slovak Ore Mountains. Eastern Slovakia has some economically significant salt deposits. The project called for the diversion of the Danube and the construction of two dams to be built by each of the partners. In Hungary withdrew from the Nagymaros venture because of environmental and other concerns. Manufacturing Prior to independence, Slovakia was the location of some of the least effective state-run industries in Czechoslovakia. Important industries include automobiles, machinery, steel, ceramics, chemicals, textiles, food and beverage processing, arms, and petroleum products. Environmental pollutionâ€”the legacy of communist-era industrializationâ€”remains a pressing concern. A Volkswagen manufacturing plant in Slovakia. Following decentralization of the banking system, a number of commercial and joint-venture banks came into being. A stock exchange operates in Bratislava. In , however, the government announced tax incentives designed to stimulate foreign investment in Slovak enterprises, such as tax grants or credits for every new job created in the country. Consequently, in the early 21st century direct foreign investment increased greatly. Trade Slovakia has depended on foreign trade to boost economic growth. Following the breakup of Czechoslovakia, trade with eastern European countries declined, while that with Western countries expanded. The volume and profile of trade between Slovakia and the Czech Republic remain significant in spite of occasional disruptions stemming from political squabbles. Major imports include machinery, automobiles, and mineral fuels.

The Czech Republic (or informally Czechia) is a small landlocked country in Central Europe, situated southeast of Germany and bordering Austria to the south, Poland to the north and Slovakia to the southeast.

A region of rolling hills and mountains, Bohemia is dominated by the national capital, Prague. Set on the Vltava River, this picturesque city of bridges and spires is the unique work of generations of artists brought in by the rulers of Bohemia. Perhaps only the French are as focused on their capital, Paris, as the Czechs are on theirs; of the two, Prague has a more magical quality for many. Moravia was equally endowed with skilled labour, which helped make Brno into one of the leading industrial towns in textiles and engineering during the 19th century and Ostrava, in the north, into a major coal-mining region, thanks to the vast fossil fuel deposits stretching over from Silesia. Wenceslas and manor houses dot the landscape and medieval town centres abound. During its 1,000-year history, the country has changed shape and reshuffled its population. As the kingdom of Bohemia, it reached its zenith of wealth and power during the 13th and 14th centuries. Through a multitude of cultural, economic, ecclesiastical, and dynastic links, Bohemian kings became directly involved in the affairs of the German rulers of the Holy Roman Empire and opened the country to German colonization, which brought prosperity through silver mining and rapid urbanization. Prague, with the oldest university north of the Alps Charles University, functioned as a royal and imperial capital. However, German colonization, which soon accounted for one-third of the total population and disadvantaged the majority Czechs, brought the seeds of discontent, resulting in an ugly, insoluble conflict in the 20th century. In the early 15th century Bohemia witnessed the Hussite revolution, a pre-Reformation movement named for Jan Hus, a follower of the English theologian and reformer John Wycliffe. After the Habsburg victory, the German language replaced Czech for almost two centuries until the Czechs experienced an extraordinary linguistic and cultural revival that coincided with the revolutions of 1848 and the spread of industrialization. Many among this German population turned into Nazi sympathizers with the ascent to power of Adolf Hitler in Germany, whose design on the German-speaking border region of Czechoslovakia was appeased by England and France in the Munich Agreement of September 1938. Emasculated, Czechoslovakia succumbed to direct German invasion six months later. After six years of brutal Nazi occupation with its legacy of the Holocaust and the postwar mass expulsion of some three million Bohemian and Slovak [Carpathian] Germans, Czechoslovakia was reconstituted, this time without Ruthenia Transcarpathian Ukraine, which was annexed by the Soviet Union. Soviet invasion Czechs confronting Soviet troops in Prague, August 21, 1945, Soviet forces had invaded Czechoslovakia to crush the reform movement known as the Prague Spring. Land Relief The country is bordered by Poland to the north and northeast, Slovakia to the east, Austria to the south, and Germany to the west and northwest. The Bohemian Massif occupies the major portion of the Czech Republic. It consists of a large, roughly ovoid elevated basin the Bohemian Plateau encircled by mountains divided into six major groups. In the west are the Berounka River highlands. In the northwest, the Ore Mountains Czech: Erzgebirge form the frontier with Germany. The point at which the Elbe Labe River breaches this range is the lowest in the country, with an elevation of 200 metres. The so-called Sudeten system of mountains a name never applied in the Czech language in the northeast forms most of the border with Poland west of the city of Ostrava. Farther to the east is the Oder Odra River lowland, a small fringe along the Polish border. In the east the Outer Carpathian Depressions, known to geographers as the Moravian-Silesian Beskids, include the valleys of the upper Oder and Morava rivers and the headstreams of the Dyje. From that point onward river traffic can travel all the way to Hamburg. There also are many smaller rivers of little economic importance. Larger rivers such as the Vltava are sources of hydroelectric power. The country is rich in mineral springs, and groundwater reserves are extensively used. Palu, Michal Havel The soil profile of the Czech Republic consists of some rich, black chernozems and good-quality brown soils in the drier and lower areas. Podzols are found in the wet districts, and stony mountain soils are typical at high elevations. Alluvial soils occur in the river basins, and heavy clay soils are found in the eastern ridges. Continental influences are marked by large fluctuations in both temperature and precipitation, while moderating oceanic influences diminish from west to

east. In general, temperatures decrease with increasing elevation but are relatively uniform across the lower portions of the country. The growing season is about days in the south but less than half that in the mountains. Maximum precipitation falls during July, while the minimum occurs in February. There are no recognizable climatic zones but rather a succession of small and varied districts; climate thus follows the topography in contributing to the diversity of the natural environment. Plant and animal life Although large areas of the original forest cover have been cleared for cultivation and for timber, woodlands remain a characteristic feature of the Czech landscape. Oak , beech , and spruce dominate the forest zones in ascending order of elevation. In the highest reaches can be found taiga and tundra vegetation characteristic of more-northerly or more-elevated regions elsewhere in Europe. The timberline runs at about 4, feet 1, metres above sea level. At these higher elevations, as in the Giant Mountains , the tree cover below the timberline consists of little more than dwarf pine. The Alpine zone supports grasses and low-growing bushes. Large mammals include bears , wolves , lynx , and wildcats *Felis sylvestris*. Smaller mammals, such as marmots , otters , martens , and minks , also inhabit the forests and wetlands. Game birds, especially pheasants , partridges , wild geese , and ducks , are common. Rarer species, such as eagles , vultures , ospreys , storks , eagle owls , bustards , and capercaillies , generally are protected. The preservation of the natural heritage is an important goal of the Czech government. Tourists are given controlled access to the reserve areas. Prazak People Ethnic groups Czechs make up roughly two-thirds of the population. The Moravians consider themselves to be a distinct group within this majority. A small Slovak minority remains from the Czechoslovakian federal period. An even smaller Polish population exists in northeastern Moravia , and some Germans still live in northwestern Bohemia. Roma Gypsies constitute a still smaller but distinct minority, having resisted assimilation for the most part. Languages Czech is the official state language and as a literary language dates to the late 13th century. The majority of the population speaks Czech as their first language. Czech and Slovak are mutually intelligible languages belonging to the West Slavic language group, which uses the Latin Roman rather than the Cyrillic alphabet. Religion During the communist era, no official statistics were kept on religion, though the activities of churches were financed by the government following the nationalization of all church property by Although religious freedom was restored in , in the early 21st century almost nine-tenths of Czechs claimed no religious affiliation. There are also Eastern Orthodox congregations and various small Protestant sects, of which the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren is one of the most important. A significant number of Czechs are members of the national Czech church, which was founded in and took the name Czechoslovak Hussite Church in Settlement patterns Industrialization and urbanization have changed the face of the Czech traditional regions, although Bohemia and, to a lesser extent, Moravia are still recognizable entities, reflecting different national and cultural heritages. Southern Bohemia and southeastern Moravia preserve local traditions of cuisine, and residents wear folk costumes on special occasions. Traditional wooden architecture is a distinctive feature of some rural areas. Population density in the Czech Republic is high; in general, communities are only a few miles apart. A notable exception are some frontier areasâ€”the low densities of which reflect the induced emigration of minorities, such as the three million Sudeten Germans who were expelled after World War II. Rural settlements are characteristically compact, but in the mountainous regions, colonized during the 13th and 14th centuries, villages straggling along narrow valleys are common. The collectivization of farmland that took place in the decades following World War II resulted in a pattern of large, regularly shaped fields, replacing the centuries-old division of land into small, irregular, privately owned plots. Urbanization in the Czech Republic is not particularly high for an industrialized country, with about three-fourths of the population being urban. Even the smallest urban centres, however, usually contain some manufacturing industry. Prague, the national capital, has historically occupied a predominant role. Brno is the chief industrial and cultural city of Moravia. Demographic trends During the 19th and early 20th centuries, population growth was mitigated by emigration to the urban centres of Austria-Hungary and overseas, especially to the United States. In general, the outstanding feature of the years of federation was stable population growth. This rather slow rate of growth was attributable in part to changes in lifestyle associated with urbanization and with the increased employment of women outside the home. Since the mids, however, the population of the Czech Republic has been declining. Moreover, by the early 21st century a

decrease in the birth rate and increase in the average life span resulted in a generally older Czech population. While the Czech Republic and Slovakia both were successors to the federal state, long-standing inequities in economic development gave the Czechs a decided advantage over the Slovaks. Rigid economic compartmentalization under Comecon Council on Mutual Economic Assistance made Slovakia, with its mineral resources and hydroelectric potential, a major producer of armaments for the former communist countries of eastern Europe. The economy of the Czech Republic, on the other hand, was relatively diversified and stable, reflecting both a more amenable geography and the historic predominance of Czechs in the federal administration. Shopping mall in Prague. The historical imbalance in government assets between the two and the problems it posed for fair apportionment were particularly pronounced in the case of military installations and equipment, of which the Czech Republic held the great majority. Based on its inherent advantages—a well-educated and skilled labour force, proximity to western Europe, and a low level of foreign debt—the Czech Republic experienced fairly low unemployment and respectable economic performance during its first years as a separate entity. The new government, headed by Pres. Privatization was achieved by means of a voucher system through which Czech citizens purchased shares in state-owned enterprises. In addition, large influxes of visitors fostered the rapid development of the tourism industry and service sector, which provided new employment that helped limit some of the usual hardships of economic restructuring. Within a few years, however, it became obvious that the Czech economy was not as healthy as had been believed. Poor management and corruption in the banking industry much of which had remained largely state controlled resulted in the failure of eight banks in . In addition, many Czechs who had turned over their privatization vouchers to unregulated private investment funds—in exchange for promises of substantial returns—lost their investments when these dubious funds began to go bankrupt. In the government responded to the economic crisis by instituting a package of austerity measures and introducing a floating exchange rate , which resulted in a significant depreciation of the koruna, the state currency. Despite these economic measures and the establishment of a new securities commission, in the late s the Czech Republic fell into a recession, marked by declines in gross domestic product GDP and wages, a growing foreign-trade deficit, and rising unemployment. For the most part, Czechs enjoy a standard of living higher than other former communist countries in eastern Europe. However, employment rates and, consequently, standards of living vary by region. For example, Prague, with its thriving international tourist trade, has had a negligible unemployment rate of less than 1 percent at the same time that some rural regions were experiencing rates as much as 20 times higher. Nationally, by the middle of the first decade of the s, less than one-tenth of the workforce was unemployed. While the euro zone struggled with a devastating debt crisis that had begun in , the Czech Republic continued to post modest growth. Francis William Carter Milan Hauner Agriculture and forestry Czech agriculture is among the most advanced in eastern Europe, with better than average yields.

Chapter 7 : Czech koruna - Wikipedia

The Czechs have a rich religious history, but don't seem very interested in organised religion any more. Photograph: Petr David Josek/AP It is often argued that the Czech Republic is one of the.

We are often asked when a good time is to go to Prague. Are the winters tolerable? Will there be snow at Christmas time? Prague is appealing in every season and has lots to offer throughout the year. Below are some of our tips based on what might be important to you. In general though, your best chance of nice weather is in late spring and early fall, i. You may also want to consider the daylight hours, which are long in late spring and summer it stays light till 9 p. Late spring and early fall are a little less touristy - still busy but not overwhelmingly so. The days are shorter in the winter and it gets dark between 4: Christmas Holidays Prague has a special magic during Christmas time and when covered with snow. Christmas and snow unfortunately rarely come together. Even Prague residents hope for a white Christmas and get excited when it actually happens. The month before Christmas is beautiful even without the snow because Prague is decorated with Christmas lights and the Christmas markets are open. Visit our Prague Christmas section to read more about this special time of the year in Prague. Make sure you dress appropriately for the weather - read our December Weather in Prague page for details. Prague in the Fall Prague is beautiful in the fall when the leaves on the trees change color. This usually happens in the second half of October. You can expect typical fall weather in October - a mixture of sunny and cloudy days, crisp air, possibly rain, and temperatures still above freezing. The autumn scenery is still beautiful in the first half of November when the colorful leaves cover the ground. Easter Holidays If you are thinking of coming to Prague in early spring, try to schedule your trip around Easter when Prague is decorated and the Easter markets are open. This is usually two weeks before and one week after the Easter weekend. You can read more about Prague Easter in our Easter in Prague section.

Chapter 8 : Czech Republic - Wikipedia

Religion in the Czech Republic was dominated by Christianity until at least the early 20th century. Since the Battle of White Mountain religious sphere was accompanied by a widespread anti-Catholic sentiment even when the whole population nominally belonged to the Catholic Church.

Prague, the most recognizable Czech city, attracts tourists from all over the world. The complex includes several churches, towers, palaces, and gardens. Brno is the second largest city in the Czech Republic and the largest in the Moravia region. Spilberk Castle is located on an elevation above the city proper. The castle is now home to the Brno City Museum. Another glorious castle built in the 13th century is Haunstejn. Located in the Usti nad Labem region, it is now in the property of the Palacky family, who are the descendants of Frantisek Palacky, one of the founding fathers of the Czech Republic. Mountaineering The Czech Republic is replete with mountains, so there are many attractive locations for tourists looking for adrenaline-fueled sports or a serene connection to the outdoors. The Krkonose or giant mountains are located on the Czech-Polish border. The highest point of the Czech Republic, Sneska, is located there. On both sides of the border, you can find several national parks. The Czech Krkonose national park was founded in and is the oldest in the country. The mountain was a popular tourist destination, which dates back to the 19th century. Today, most visitors come for the winter sports and mountain biking. For those who would like to climb on their own, there are the Adrspach-Teplice rocks in northern Bohemia. The area is a bit shrouded in mystery and full of lakes and waterfalls. Perfect for a day exploring the outdoors. Czech Cuisine You have to eat. The beer just makes every meal a bit better. Whether you are a fan of street food or splendid restaurants, traditional Czech cuisine is available at every corner. It typically includes vegetables such as celery, carrots, and parsley and is mixed with spices. The most popular restaurants tend to be located in the center of Prague. Although Prague is more affordable than the Western European capitals, centrally located restaurants tend to be the most expensive. In the Kolkovna, you can order svickova na smetane and pair it with some traditional Czech wine. Karlovy Vary is the most popular. Located roughly kilometers north-west of Prague, this spa was a place of rest for many famous people during modern history. It has thirteen main springs and is surrounded by woods. There are many hotels to choose from as well as hundreds of treatments to enjoy. Around 50 kilometers south from Karlovy Vary is Marianske Lazne, which is another popular spa. If you enjoy rural tourism, check out Velike Losiny, which is a spa village located in the north-east of the country. Read about my latest adventures and get important travel tips and advice in your inbox by subscribing to my newsletter. We respect your privacy and will never share or sell your information.

Chapter 9 : Czech Republic climate: average weather, temperature, precipitation, best time

The other half of that former nation, for example, has the long-form name of the Slovak Republic, but it is more commonly known by its short-form name, Slovakia.