

## *Sport & Physical Activity - Czech Community*

### Basic Facts:

- The Czech Republic joined the EU in 2004.
- It is a land locked country in Central Europe. It shares borders with the four countries of Slovakia, Poland, Germany and Austria.
- The capital city is Prague.
- The 2003 Census showed it had a population of just over 10.25 million people.
- The Slovak climate is temperate with warm summers and cold, cloudy and humid winters.

### Demographics:

- The majority of inhabitants are ethnically Czech and speak Czech. Other ethnic groups consist of Germans, Roma, Hungarians, Ukrainians and Poles. A certain percentage of Slovaks also remained in the Czech Republic after the 1993 Division.

### Immigration:

- Czech immigrants have, like the Poles been coming to Britain since 1945 when many Czechs served valiantly in the Allied Forces defending Britain and subsequently settled and made their lives here.
- Worker Registration figures between 2004 and 2008 record **29,945** new arrivals into England. Many of these have settled in Central and North London, Manchester and West Yorkshire.

### Health:

- Total health spending accounted for 6.8% of GDP in 2006, lower than the average of 8.9% in OECD countries.
- In 2006, life expectancy at birth stood at 76.7 years, slightly more than two years below the OECD average.
- The daily smoking rate among adults remains high at 24.3% of the adult population in 2005 - slightly above the OECD average of 23.7% - and only slightly lower than the 1993 Czech Republic figure of 26.1%.
- The obesity rate among adults, based on actual measures of height and weight, was 17.0% in 2005. It is slightly higher than the OECD average of 15.4%.

### Religion:

- The main religion is Roman Catholic with a small percentage of Protestants, There are a few Czechoslovak Hussites as well as a small Jewish community. A large percentage of the population also claim to be atheist.

### Physical Activity and Sport:

- The National Cycling Development Strategy of the Czech Republic (2005) strongly advocates the development of cycle tourism and cycling for health.
- The Czech Republic has a strong tradition in sport and has produced European, World and Olympic champions in athletics, ice hockey, football and canoe slalom. Similar to Slovakia, because of the type of landscape that exists, winter sports activities are also very popular especially alpine and cross country skiing. Other popular sports include basketball, tennis, volleyball, rowing, swimming and table tennis. Golf is also rapidly growing in popularity, the country boasting over 100 clubs with more under construction.
- The Czech Republic finished with six medals at the Beijing Olympics (3 gold and 3 silver) covering the sports of canoe slalom, athletics, shooting and rowing.

In recent years, Rugby Union has also become an established sport in the Czech Republic their league boasting 17 teams. This provides new opportunities for English clubs to promote the sport here in England with newly arrived Czech immigrants.

### Further Information:

There are a number of online magazines in Czech and Slovakian which include

- Czechstuff - Czechstuff magazine
- Pohyby - Pohyby Magazine (also covers Slovakian information)
- Echo - Echo Magazine (also covers Slovakian information)

For more information about partnership working with the Czech community please contact Sporting Equals on **0121 777 1375**.

For further details please contact:

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