How’s Life in the Czech Republic?

Additional information, including the data used in this country note, can be found at: www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2016-country-notes-data.xlsx
The OECD Better Life Initiative, launched in 2011, focuses on the aspects of life that matter to people and that shape the quality of their lives. The Initiative comprises a set of regularly updated well-being indicators and an in-depth analysis of specific topics, published in the How’s Life? report. It also includes an interactive web application, the Better Life Index, and a number of methodological and research projects to improve the information base towards a better understanding of well-being trends and their drivers.

The OECD Better Life Initiative:

- Helps to inform policy making to improve quality of life.
- Connects policies to people’s lives.
- Generates support for needed policy measures.
- Improves civic engagement by encouraging the public to create their own Better Life Index and share their preferences about what matters most for well-being.
- Empowers the public by improving their understanding of policy-making.

This brochure presents selected findings for the Czech Republic from the OECD Better Life Index 2016 (page 3), the How’s Life? report (pages 4-6) and shows what Czech users of the Better Life Index are telling us about their well-being priorities (page 7). A supporting Excel file with the data underlying the graphs shown in this note and further information is available here: [www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2016-country-notes-data.xlsx](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2016-country-notes-data.xlsx).

**HOW’S LIFE?**

How’s Life?, published every two years, provides a comprehensive picture of well-being in OECD countries and other major economies by bringing together an internationally comparable set of well-being indicators that the OECD considers as essential to a good life. It looks at people’s material conditions and quality of life across the population in eleven dimensions including: income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing; health status; work-life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being.

The How’s Life? 2015 report includes for the first time a set of indicators to measure the stocks of resources that help to support well-being over time. The report also contains three special chapters focusing on child well-being, volunteering and regional well-being.
HOW’S LIFE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC IN 2016?

The Czech Republic is among the OECD countries with relatively low average household net adjusted disposable income per capita as well as low average earnings. However, the employment rate (67%) lies above the OECD average of 65.8% and labour market insecurity in the Czech Republic is below the OECD average. Life expectancy in the Czech Republic (78.3 years) lies below the OECD average of 79.9 years. While 68.9% of OECD adult citizens perceive their health as good or better than good, the share is only 59.6% in the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic has the highest level of educational attainment in the OECD: 93.2% of the Czech adult working-age population have completed at least an upper secondary education compared to the OECD average of 76.4%. The Czech Republic also performs relatively well in terms of personal safety. In the Czech Republic, life satisfaction is similar to the OECD average level and higher than in all other Eastern European OECD countries.

![Chart showing well-being strengths and weaknesses in the Czech Republic](chart.png)

This chart shows areas of well-being strengths and weaknesses in the Czech Republic, based on a ranking of all OECD countries. Longer lines show areas of relative strength, while shorter lines show areas of relative weakness. For more details, see [www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2016-country-notes-data.xlsx](http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2016-country-notes-data.xlsx).


Resources for future well-being in the Czech Republic

Beyond measuring well-being today, How’s Life? 2015 looks at some of the resources (or “capital stocks”) that will shape people’s well-being in the future. These include aspects of natural capital, human capital, social capital and economic capital.

For example, trust in other people is an important component of social capital. In the Czech Republic trust in others lies below the European OECD average level: on a scale from 0 (“you do not trust any other person”) to 10 (“most people can be trusted”), the average score given by people in the Czech Republic is 5.3, while the European OECD average stands at 5.8.
HOW’S LIFE FOR CHILDREN IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC?

Giving children a good start in life is important both for well-being today, and in the future.

Overall child health outcomes are good in the Czech Republic: the infant mortality and the teenage birth rate lie substantially below the OECD average. Only 9.8% of Czech children report their health as fair or poor, one of the lowest shares in the OECD.

The share of Czech teenagers aged 15 to 19 that are neither in employment nor in education or training stands at 3.2% compared to the OECD average of 7.1%.

However, only 49.6% of 14-year olds in the Czech Republic intend to vote when they are adults, by far the lowest share in the OECD.

Czech students are substantially less likely to find that most of their classmates are kind and helpful than the average student in the OECD. However, only 5.3% of Czech children report that they have been bullied at least twice in the last two months compared to the OECD average of 10.1%.

### Inequalities in Child Well-being

Across all OECD countries there are large inequalities in child well-being. Children from wealthier households enjoy both better material living conditions, and a higher quality of life, on average. In the Czech Republic, children from low socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to report feeling a lot of pressure from schoolwork than children from high socio-economic backgrounds. There are also large differences in life satisfaction.

#### Inequalities in Social and Family Environment

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Czech Republic</th>
<th>OECD</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>10.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
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<td>6.4</td>
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#### Inequalities in Subjective Well-being

Average life satisfaction score of children aged 11, 13 and 15 on a scale from 0 to 10 (highest)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Czech Republic</th>
<th>OECD</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
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THE VALUE OF GIVING: VOLUNTEERING AND WELL-BEING

Volunteering makes an important “hidden contribution” to well-being, producing goods and services that are not captured by conventional economic statistics. When you add up the value of the time people spend on volunteering in OECD countries, it amounts to roughly 2% of GDP per year.

Volunteering in the Czech Republic and the OECD

The main sector of volunteering activity in the Czech Republic is education and culture, followed by sports. Volunteering through an organisation (termed “formal volunteering”) is less common in the Czech Republic than in the average OECD country. 17.7% of the Czech working-age population report that they engaged in formal volunteering during the past 12 months. This is the lowest share in the OECD area. The OECD average stands at 34.2%.

How often do people volunteer? 46.2% of Czechs who participate in formal volunteering do so less than once a month. The share of formal volunteers who volunteer every day is 6.1% and lies above the OECD average of 4.7%. In general, Czech volunteers tend to engage in volunteering activities on a more frequent basis than the average OECD volunteer.

Who volunteers? Across the OECD area, people with a university degree are more likely to participate in formal volunteering than those with lower levels of education. Similarly, people who are in employment are more likely to volunteer than those who are unemployed. Participation in formal volunteering also increases with people’s level of household income.

Volunteering brings benefits for volunteers themselves, as well as for the people and communities they help. For example, people who engage in volunteering are more likely to have higher literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills and receive higher wages, on average, relative to non-volunteers.

In OECD countries, older people who volunteer formally are more likely to report a better health status than non-volunteers. Furthermore, formal volunteers in the OECD, on average, also report higher life satisfaction than non-volunteers.
GOING LOCAL: MEASURING WELL-BEING IN REGIONS

Where people live has an important impact on their opportunities to live well. There can be large differences in average levels of well-being in different regions within the same country. How’s Life in your Region? and the OECD regional well-being web-tool assess performance across 9 dimensions of well-being in the 362 OECD large regions – 8 of which are in the Czech Republic. Drawing on this work, How’s Life? 2015 includes a special focus on measuring well-being in regions.

Regional gaps in material living conditions

Regional inequalities in income in the Czech Republic are comparable to regional differences in Poland, but larger than in Germany: the average household adjusted disposable income is 50% higher in Prague than in the Northwest. Regarding relative income poverty, while 3.3% of people in Prague have an income of less than half of the Czech median income, the share is 10.2% in Moravia-Silesia. Unemployment rates range from 2.5% in Prague to 8.7% in the Northwest. This gap (6.2 percentage points) is slightly smaller than the regional differences observed in Poland or Germany.

Regional differences in people’s quality of life

Regarding educational attainment, 97.2% of the labour force has at least a secondary education in Prague, while this share is only 89.5% in the Northwest. This gap (7.7 percentage points) is larger than regional differences in Poland, but smaller than in Germany.

Regional variation of air quality in the Czech Republic is smaller than in Poland, but larger than in Germany.

The share of households with a broadband connection ranges from 88% in Prague to only 68% in the Northwest.

* For more information (including data for other regions), see: www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-2016-country-notes-data.xlsx.
BETTER LIFE INDEX

The Better Life Index is an interactive web application that invites citizens to compare well-being across OECD countries and beyond on the basis of the set of well-being indicators explored in How’s Life?. Users chose what weight to give to each of the eleven dimensions shown below and then see how countries’ perform, based on their own personal priorities in life.

Users can also share their index with other people in their networks, as well as with the OECD. This allows the OECD to gather valuable information on the importance that users attach to various life dimensions, on how these preferences differ across countries, and on the demographic characteristics of users.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO PEOPLE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC?

Since its launch in May 2011, the Better Life Index has attracted over eight million visits from just about every country on the planet and has received over 17 million page views. To date, over 41,600 people in Czech Republic have visited the website making Czech Republic the 36th country overall in traffic to the website. The top cities are Prague (56% of visits), Brno (12%), Ostrava, Pilsen and Olomouc.

The following country findings reflect the ratings voluntarily shared by 619 website visitors in the Czech Republic. Findings are only indicative and are not representative of the population at large. For Czech users of the Better Life Index, health, life satisfaction and education are the three most important topics (shown below).¹ Up to date information, including a breakdown of participants in each country by gender and age can be found here: www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/responses/#CZE.

1 User information for the Czech Republic is based on shared indexes submitted between May 2011 and May 2016.
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