

This country profile was compiled by the OECD Secretariat and reflects information available as of March 2015. Further information and analysis can be found in the publication: OECD (2015) [Water Resources Allocation: Sharing Risks and Opportunities](#), OECD Studies on Water, OECD Publishing. Country profiles for all of the 37 allocation regimes in 27 OECD and key partner countries surveyed for this project are available for download at: <http://www.oecd.org/fr/publications/water-resources-allocation-9789264229631-en.htm>.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Overview and highlights

In the Czech Republic, water resources are not subject to legal ownership. Water authorities, mainly ministries, have the responsibility to deal with water resources allocation policies. However, other water authorities at the local level are responsible for issuing entitlements.

Key characteristics of the prevailing allocation regime in the Czech Republic include:

- Flow rate fully managed or controlled, as water systems are entirely regulated;
- No explicit limit on water abstraction;
- Water entitlements are unbundled from land ownership and granted to individuals;
- An entitlement not being used for more than 2 years may be changed or revoked by the water authority;
- Before a new entitlement can be granted, an assessment of the water balance in basin/ resource pool by the water authority is required;
- Water resources are considered neither over-allocated nor over-used and there is no pre-defined set of priority uses;
- Abstraction charges do not vary according to type of user and charges typically do not reflect water scarcity;
- Metering is the monitoring mechanism for all water users. Users have the obligation to measure their own uses and water authorities and the Czech Environmental Inspection control these practices.

Legal and institutional setting for water allocation

Institution	Scale	Main Responsibilities
Ministry of Agriculture	National	Central water authority, except explicitly assigned tasks to other ministries.
Ministry of the Environment	National	Protection of quantity and quality of surface and ground waters; monitoring and assessment of surface and ground waters (jointly with Ministry of Agriculture); assessment of water management plans in terms of environmental impact. Central water authority for protected areas of natural water accumulation, protection of water resources, sensitive areas, protection of surface and ground waters from pollutants, disposal of accidents, flood prevention, fees for discharge of wastewater to surface and ground waters, reporting on the implementation of the relevant EU directives and coordinating the adoption and implementation of EU legislation in the area of water (jointly with Ministry of Agriculture).
Ministry of Health	National	Central water authority for surface water use for bathing (in cooperation with Ministry of Environment).
Ministry of Transport	National	Central water authority for navigation.
Ministry of Defence	National	Central water authority in the areas of military bases.
Water authorities	Local (Municipalities)	Entitlements issuing.
<p>Legal context for water allocation: Roman/ Statutory Law. Legal definition of ownership of water resources: Water resources are not a subject to legal ownership (either public or private).</p>		

Tracking water scarcity

Water balance (according to act No. 254/ 2001 coll. (Water Act), section 21, par 1) is compiled annually to identify areas where the water scarcity could be a potential problem.

Allocation Regime Example: Czech Republic's (national scale)

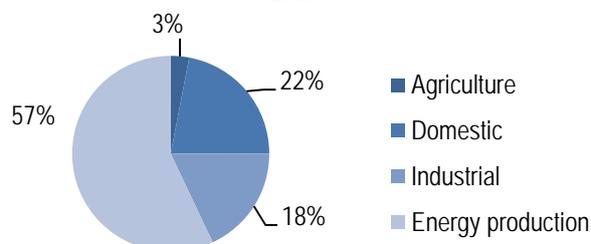
Physical features of the water resource

Situated on the watershed of three seas - the North Sea, the Baltic and Black Sea. Virtually all major flows divert water into neighbouring countries and water resources are entirely dependent on atmospheric precipitation.

The **flow rate is managed or controlled** fully, as water systems are entirely regulated.

There is significant **non-consumptive use** in hydro power and transport activities.

Mean annual inflow/ recharge consumed per use:



Defining the available resource pool

Are limits defined on consumptive use? No.

- There is no explicit limit on water abstraction.

Are environmental flows clearly defined? Yes.

- They are defined by relevant water authority. However, Austria's Water Act (254/2001) establishes the criteria and mechanisms for setting "Minimal Residual Flows"(MRF) ¹. The latter is defined as "the flow of the surface water that still enables general use of the surface water and ecological functions of the water stream".
- Requirements for freshwater and terrestrial biodiversity are not considered.

Are there arrangements to deal with impacts of climate change? National strategy under construction.

What is the status of resource pool? Neither over-allocated nor over-used.

Factors taken into account in the definition of the available resource pool

Factor	Taken into account?	If taken into account, how?
Non-consumptive uses (e.g. navigation, hydroelectricity)	✓	Water balance
Base flow requirements	✓	Water balance
Return flows (how much water should be returned to the resource pool, after use)	✓	Water balance
Inter-annual and inter-seasonal variability	✓	Water balance
Connectivity with other water bodies	✓	Water balance
Climate change		

¹ The concept of "Environmental Flow" or "Ecological Flow" is not currently defined in the Czech legislation.

Entitlements to use water

Definition of entitlements	Characteristics of entitlements
<p>Are entitlements legally defined? Yes.</p> <p>Are private entitlements defined? Yes, as individual entitlements (to an individual person).</p> <p>Nature of entitlement: Defined as the purpose that water may be used for and maximum volume that may be taken in a nominated period. Water entitlements unbundled from property titles.</p> <p>Period granted for: A term of 10 years with the expectation of periodic renewal and 30 years permission for hydropower installation.</p> <p>Return flow obligations: Not specified.</p>	<p>If the entitlement is not used for more than 2 years it may be changed or revoked by the water authority (Act No. 254/2001 coll. (Water Act), section 12, par 1).</p> <p>Are entitlements differentiated based on the level of security of supply (or risk of shortage)? No.</p> <p>Is there a possibility to trade, lease or transfer entitlements? No.</p>
<p>Type of users not required to hold a water entitlement to abstract water: According to act No. 254/ 2001 coll. (Water Act), section 6, par 1, "anyone can abstract surface water without permission for their own use, as long as it is not necessary technical equipment".</p> <p>Requirements to obtain a new entitlement or to increase the size of an existing entitlement: Conditional to the assessment of the water balance in basin/ resource pool (water authority).</p>	

Abstraction charges

User category	Abstraction charge?	Basis for charge	Reflects water scarcity?
Agriculture	Yes	Volumetric	Yes
Domestic	Yes		Yes
Industrial	Yes		Yes
Energy production (not including hydro power)	Yes		Yes
Hydro power	No		Yes
Other. Specify:			

Dealing with exceptional circumstances

<p>Distinction between the allocation regimes used in "normal" and extreme/ severe water shortage times? Yes.</p> <p>Definition of "exceptional" circumstances: Temporary water shortage or any threat to public water supply. The Water authority may temporarily restrict or prohibit withdrawals (Act No. 254/2001 coll. (Water Act), section 109, par 1.).</p> <p>Legal bodies declaring the onset of "exceptional" circumstances: Water authorities. Stakeholders are not involved in the process.</p>
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Pre-defined priority classes:

1. Drinking water supply

2. Others (agriculture, industrial, energy production, transfer to the sea or another system and national security).

Monitoring and enforcement

Responsible authority: Water authorities and the Czech Environmental Inspection.

Types of withdrawals monitored: Agriculture, domestic, industrial, energy production and transfer to the sea or another system.

Monitoring mechanisms: Metering. Users have the obligation to measure and water authorities and the Czech Environmental Inspection control these practices.

Sanctions: Financial (Act No. 254/2001 coll. (Water Act), section 116-125).

Conflict resolution mechanisms? No.