Causes of migration in the Czech Republic
Czech Republic
Introduction

Since regaining its freedom in 1989 and peacefully splitting from the Slovak Republic in 1993, the Czech Republic has been transforming its former socialist/communist society into a democratic, parliamentary one based on a free-market economy.

Like many other Eastern European countries, the Czech Republic has transformed in the last 15 years from a land of emigration to one of transit and immigration.
Short history – from the first to the actual migration waves
First waves of migration

The first immigrants arrived in the 13th and 14th centuries from the actual German territory. They settled in newly established towns, villages in border zone areas, and in highlands, and they played an important role in Czech lands (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) until the end of the 1940s.
German Embassy in Prague
From the 19th Century to World War I

Between 1850 and 1914, approximately 1.6 million people of the Czech population, most of them agricultural and industrial workers, went to the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Austria, Hungary, Russia, and countries of the former Yugoslavia in search of economic opportunities.
Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk
The first President and founder of Czechoslovakia
Interwar period

After the formation of Czechoslovakia, people continued to emigrate for economic and family reunification reasons, mainly to the US, France, and Germany. This emigration flow peaked in the early 1920s, but continued until the end of the 1930s. Following World War I, 40,000 Czechs returned from the US and about 100,000 returned from Austria. The flow of returnees was smaller than the emigration flow, and the Czech Republic's population decreased in this interwar period.
According to the Czechoslovakian census, in 1921 there were about 3 million Germans, composing 30.6% of the population. In the interwar period, more Germans than Czechs worked in its booming industrial sector, mainly in light branches like glass and textiles. Few Germans left Czechoslovakia during this time; their share of the population stood at 29.5% in 1930 and 29.2% in September 1938.
Migrations after World War II

Between 1945 and 1946, approximately 2.8 million Germans (about 25% of Czechoslovakia's population of that time) were expelled from the country, most of them returning to Germany.
Comunist Era

During the communist era (1948 to 1989), highly skilled Czechs and Slovaks continued to leave the country despite the risks. From 1950 through 1989, it is estimated that more than 550,000 people emigrated. Emigration meant breaking all family ties and social networks because those who left were not allowed to return. In addition, emigration was considered a criminal offense. The consequences included confiscation of possessions and sometimes the persecution of relatives.
In Prag wird RECHTS gefahren!
Reasons behind this highly skilled emigration were mostly political and economic. Some people could no longer bear the anti-democratic and totalitarian regimes while others were dissatisfied with their general standard of living.
Migration since 1989

When the **Czech Republic** split from **Slovakia** in **1993**, it carried over some migration provisions from the **1989-1992 Czechoslovakia** period.

More importantly, in **1993** the newly independent country established a liberal migration policy that, coupled with the country's geographic position, helped the Czech Republic become home to tens of thousands of migrants from **Europe** and **Asia** during the **1990s**. The majority have been economic migrants and their families, but many quasi-legal migrants who made use of loopholes in the legislation have also entered.
In the mid-1990s, thousands of Czech Roma applied for asylum first in Canada and then in the UK. The Roma — an ethnic group spread across Europe that can be traced back to northern India — have faced high levels of discrimination, unemployment, and poverty.
Emigration, which initially increased in the years just after independence in 1989, dropped significantly after 1993 to an average of about 850 emigrants per year, according to official records.
Immigration in the Czech Republic

Immigrants have been attracted to the Czech Republic because of its strong labor market.

In 2004, there were 173,000 immigrants in the country who held work-related permits, 62% for temporary working and 38% for doing business in the country (the latter is easier to obtain, however). A third of the economically active foreigners are in Prague.
Prague
The main countries of origin were Ukraine (78,263), Slovakia (47,352), Vietnam (34,179), Poland (16,265), Russia (14,743), Germany (5,772), Bulgaria (4,447), and Moldova (4,085).

In addition to Germany, legal immigrants came from the following Western countries: the US (3,750), Austria (2,080), the UK (1,813), France (1,362), Japan (994), the Netherlands (923), Greece (792), and Canada (571).
Conclusions: Emigration causes in the Czech Republic

- **Agricultural and industrial workers** emigrated from Czech at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century **in search of economic opportunities**.
- After the formation of Czechoslovakia, people continued to emigrate for **economical reasons and family reunification**.
- After the World War II, approximately **3 million Germans** left Czechoslovakia **after being expelled**.
- In the **Comunist Era**, people emigrated for **political and economical reasons**, due to the comunist system and dissatisfaction with their general standards of living.
- **Roma people** left Czech Republic in the mid-1990s after facing problems of **discrimination, unemployment, and poverty**.
Conclusions: Immigration causes in the Czech Republic

- The German immigrants came in Czech lands as workers in the industrial sector.
- After the separation between the Czech Republic and Slovakia, immigrants came in the newly independent country because of its liberal migration policy and for economical reasons.
- Czech Republic was an attraction for immigrants because of its strong labor market and because foreigners are easily able to find jobs.
Bibliography

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