

## 5.2 ETHNICITY IN CZECHIA

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National identity, i.e. the positive relation of a human being to the nation, is one of various collective social identities (Vlachová, Řeháková 2004) that still play a significant role in the lives of people and societies in spite of the growing significance of supranational or regional units (Vlachová, Řeháková 2004; Kučerová 2009). While the definition of national identity is rather broad and is often ascertained through selective surveys, citizenship or nationality is generally monitored in the census. However, with changes in methods of detecting nationality from a definition based on the language usually spoken to the mother tongue to a possibility to choose any nationality without restriction the two terms become rather closer. To a certain degree this is drawn from a comparison of Czech population structure according to mother tongue and nationality in the time when nationality was not defined primarily by language itself. People did not always choose the same nationality as their mother tongue (Sekera 1976; Srb, Růžková 1993; 2003) and this could be the reason for a different national identity<sup>1</sup>. Major differences were evident mainly in cases of the Russian and Roma mother tongues and nationalities (Srb, Růžková 2003).

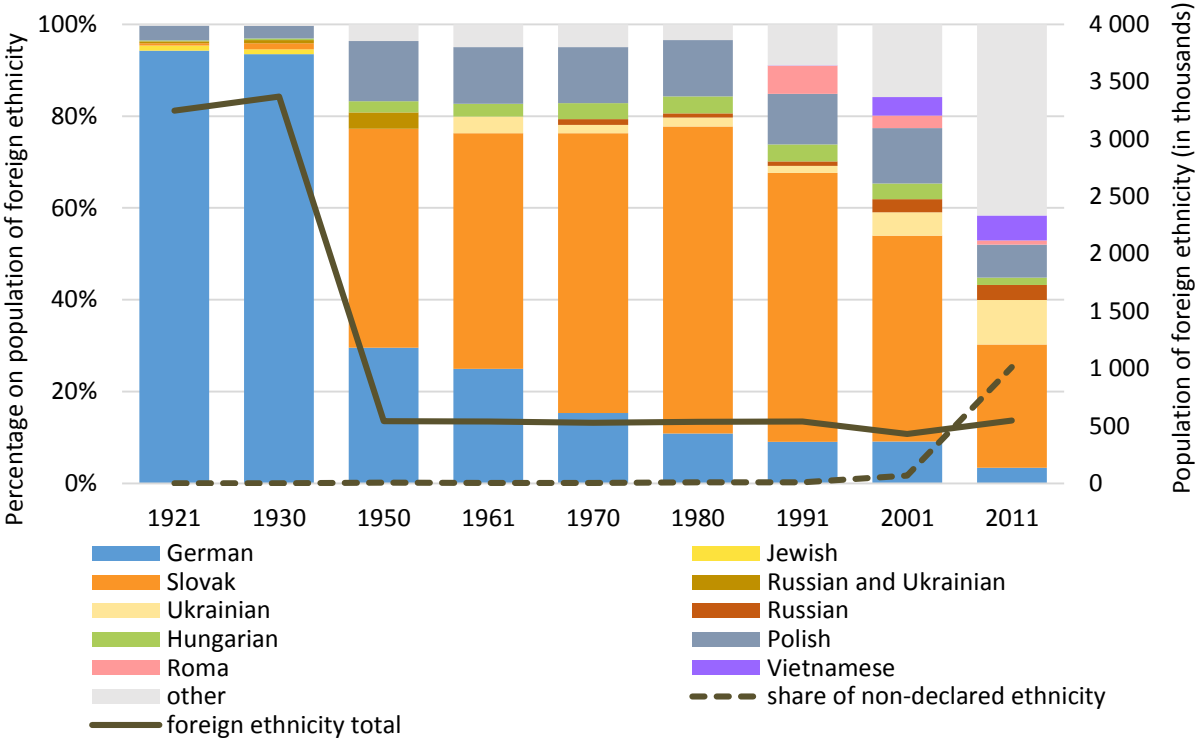
The goal of the specialized map is to evaluate spatial developments in the ethnic structure of Czechia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> and to show the most significant trends in this period. In order to make older high-quality cartographic works accessible to a wider community we used a nationalities map from the Atlas of the Czechoslovak Republic (Atlas republiky Československé) published in 1935 to evaluate the inter-war period. The map contains data from the 1930 census represented by isolines and proportional symbols created on the basis of combinations of the territorial and population principles. This provides squares placed in the centre of a continuous territory with a population of 4, 6, 9 thousand and so on and with a similar ethnic structure (Boháč 1935). The map created from data from the most recent census also works with the level of municipalities. The contour lines (izolines) method for the percentages of persons of Czech, Moravian and Silesian descent in the population makes it possible to compare changes between 1930 and 2011. The ethnic structure of the population is worked out for ORP<sup>2</sup> area which – unlike the map evaluating the situation in 1930 (where there are no borders marked between nationally different territories) – makes it possible to identify the ethnic structure in specific territories.

Ethnic structure has been systematically studied in the Czech Lands since 1880 and methods have changed several times during this period. Before WWI nationality was defined on the basis of “consorting language”, i.e. the language people used commonly. This system did not allow all people to claim affiliation to ethnic minorities. The post-war definition deriving from the mother tongue was not generally accepted and indeed was widely criticised (ČSÚ 2010). Thus in 1950 surveying nationality on the basis of a mother tongue was abandoned and each individual could decide their own nationality. Since 1991 as well as Czech, Moravian and Silesian nationalities are also surveyed (with people able

<sup>1</sup> Certainly the reason could also be a misunderstanding of questions or a different interpretation of them.

<sup>2</sup> ORP – “Obec s rozšířenou působností”: Municipality with extended powers.

to choose their nationality) and in 2001 for the first time residents could cite two nationalities or decide for neither. The possibility not to answer the question can expose persons who do not want to report any nationality and this is conductive piece of information for the evaluation of a socio-spatial structure. Unfortunately this possibility was also chosen by people who just did not want to answer, and thus these data did not provide sufficient evidence, particularly in some areas. In 2011 25% of people did not declare their nationality.



**Figure 5.2.1:** Population of foreign ethnicities in Czechia in 1921–2011  
**Source:** SÚS, 1924, 1934, 1958; ÚKLKS, 1965; ČSÚ 1970–2011

The ethnic structure of the Czech population changed significantly due to several important political events in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (see Figure 5.2.1). The map shows the ethnicity of Czechia’s population in 1930 and 2011. These years represent two of three periods into which the development of the country’s ethnicity structure can be divided. The inter-war period is characterised by the high percentage of people who were not ethnic Czechs, amounting to 31.2%. The majority of them were ethnic Germans or native German speakers. They had been settled here since around the 13<sup>th</sup> century and in 1930 they amounted to 3.15 million (29.5% of the whole population). After 1910 this percentage dropped due to an older age structure and a change in methods of data collection (Kučera 1994). People of other ethnic groups totalled less than 2% of the population (the most numerous being ethnic Polish – 0.9%). The distribution of German inhabitants across the Czech lands in the inter-war period has frequently been shown and described (besides the Atlas of the Czechoslovak Republic see also the Atlas of Czech

History, Atlas of the Czech Republic, Otto Historic Atlas<sup>3</sup>). The German population lived primarily in border regions of Czechia, mostly in the northwest. They also formed a significant part of the population in Svitavy, Jihlava, and in Brno and other bigger cities. People of Polish descent dwelt in the north-eastern part of Czechia and the Jewish population could be found mainly in Prague (see the Map sheet section B 5.2 Ethnicity in Prague) but also in Brno or Ostrava.

Following WWII and the resettlement of the German population the ethnic structure of Czechia was significantly homogenized. Post-war censuses already distinguished between Czech and Slovak nationalities and thus the Slovak nationality became the second most numerous ethnic group both for this reason and due to the completion of resettlement in border areas and recruitment to the mines and steelworks in the Ostrava region (Kučera 1994). Slovaks represented a significant proportion of the population in a large part of the formerly German areas (for more information on the spatial differentiation of nationalities in the socialist period see, for instance, the Atlas of the Czech Republic Country, Atlas of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic or Kučera [1994]). After the opening of the borders in 1989 the ethnic structure began to become more complex again, more in terms of the growing significance of a larger number of nationalities rather than of the increasing share of population of other ethnic groups. The percentage of ethnic Czechs (later separately Czechs, Moravians and Silesians) has been fairly stable in the long-run. In 1970 a 95% of people claimed Czech (Moravian and Silesian) nationality, in 2001 it was 94%, and in 2011 only 69%. However, when persons who did not give their nationality are excluded, the percentage was 93%. The second most populous nationality in Czechia is Slovak (147,000 people, 1.9% of those inhabitants who gave their nationality), followed by Ukrainian (53,000 people, 0.7%) and Polish (39,000 people, 0.5%). The distribution of ethnic Slovaks is relatively even, with the biggest concentrations in the Morava-Silesian region (the largest being in ORP Karviná – 6%) and then in the northwest (the largest being in ORP Aš – 4.8%) and south Bohemia. The Ukrainian minority in Czechia is gradually growing and the most of them (in both relative terms and on an ORP level<sup>4</sup>) live in Prague (2.3%) and in some ORPs of the Central Bohemia region (the most in ORPs Brandýs nad Labem, Lysá nad Labem). The Polish population traditionally represents a significant proportion of inhabitants in so-called Těšín's Silesia (17%). The German population is concentrated similarly to Slovaks in north-west Bohemia and the majority of ethnic Vietnamese can be found in ORP Cheb (4.8%).

	Slovak			Ukrainian		
	Municipality	District	%	Municipality	District	%
1	Světlík	Český Krumlov	15.54	Třebčice	Plzeň-jih	36.51
2	Bílá	Frýdek-Místek	14.90	Žernov	Semily	23.27
3	Malšín	Český Krumlov	12.70	Selmice	Pardubice	21.90
4	Okrouhlá	Cheb	11.76	Vlkančice	Praha-východ	12.38

<sup>3</sup> Atlas československých dějin, Atlas krajiny České republiky, Ottův historický atlas.

<sup>4</sup> Evaluating municipalities in detail, Ukrainian inhabitants pre dominate with rather higher percentages in rather small municipalities (see Table 5.2.1).

5	Hoštice	Kroměříž	11.57	Lhotka nad Labem	Litoměřice	12.03
6	Zbytiny	Prachatice	10.95	Květinov	Havlíčkův Brod	10.88
7	Malá Štáhle	Bruntál	10.78	Chelčice	Strakonice	10.66
8	Rovná	Sokolov	10.66	Březovice	Mladá Boleslav	10.30
9	Rokytovec	Mladá Boleslav	10.43	Střítež	Český Krumlov	10.27
10	Nová Pec	Prachatice	10.43	Bříství	Nymburk	9.43
	<b>Česko</b>		1,89	<b>Česko</b>		0,68
	Polish			Vietnamese		
	Municipality	District	%	Municipality	District	%
1	Hrádek	Frýdek-Místek	36.35	Hřensko	Děčín	34.36
2	Milíkov	Frýdek-Místek	34.83	Strážný	Prachatice	28.10
3	Bocanovice	Frýdek-Místek	33.24	Potůčky	Karlovy Vary	23.64
4	Košařiska	Frýdek-Místek	32.21	Petrovice	Ústí nad Labem	19.54
5	Vendryně	Frýdek-Místek	30.37	Horní Blatná	Karlovy Vary	18.98
6	Bukovec	Frýdek-Místek	29.80	Rozvadov	Tachov	16.32
7	Ropice	Frýdek-Místek	28.61	Přimda	Tachov	14.02
8	Bystřice	Frýdek-Místek	28.05	Chvalovice	Znojmo	13.64
9	Dolní Lomná	Frýdek-Místek	27.47	Moldava	Teplice	13.53
10	Stonava	Karviná	25.89	Česká Kubice	Domažlice	13.16
	<b>Česko</b>		0,5	<b>Česko</b>		0,38
	German			Roma		
	Municipality	District	%	Municipality	District	%
1	Mikulov	Teplice	12.78	Lipová	Děčín	6.83
2	Horní Blatná	Karlovy Vary	12.77	Králova Lhota	Rychnov nad Kněžnou	6.82
3	Abertamy	Karlovy Vary	12.21	Zhoř	Tachov	5.56
4	Měděnec	Chomutov	11.50	Semněvice	Domažlice	5.31
5	Tatrovice	Sokolov	11.30	Ponědraž	Jindřichův Hradec	5.06
6	Josefov	Sokolov	9.91	Dražovice	Klatovy	3.88
7	Pernink	Karlovy Vary	9.35	Hlinka	Bruntál	3.82
8	Stříbrná	Sokolov	8.78	Měrovice nad Hanou	Přerov	3.56
9	Vejprty	Chomutov	8.75	Mnichov	Domažlice	3.42
10	Žacléř	Trutnov	8.74	Želeč	Prostějov	2,80
	<b>Česko</b>		0,24	<b>Česko</b>		0,07

**Table 5.2.1:** Ten municipalities with the highest share of the given ethnicity in 2011

**Source:** ČSÚ, 2011

Notes: (1) Percentages are the proportion of those who gave their nationality in the census. (2) The table shows those ethnicities with the highest shares of Czechia's population as well as the Roma ethnicity which has long been associated with Czechia although only 0.05% claimed it in 2011. Roma individuals often do not claim Roma ethnicity (Kalibová 2001). (3) Only municipalities with more than 100 inhabitants are included in the table.

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