

CZECH COMMISSION FOR UNESCO



Organizace
spojených národů
pro vzdělávání,
vědu a kulturu



Přidružené školy
UNESCO



Intangible
Cultural
Heritage



Memory of
the World



národní geopark



The abbreviation UNESCO, best-known to the public for its association with the monuments on the World Heritage List, officially stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. It was established on 16th November 1945, its primary task being to strengthen and maintain peace and international understanding by developing cooperation between countries in the areas of education, science and culture and by advocating respect for human rights and law.

I am delighted that the then Czechoslovakia was involved in the birth of the organization that set out these objectives. In spite of the fact that UNESCO defined these objectives shortly after WW II, when peace and international understanding were desperately needed, they have in my view lost none of their urgency down the years. By contrast, the development of the global population, of societies and of the climate changes we have seen in recent decades means that strengthening international cooperation and understanding between people of different nationalities and cultures would appear to be an essential condition to maintain human existence.

All three areas of human activity which UNESCO supports and develops are able to help towards this: education, science and information and culture, which, given its universal nature plays an uncommonly important role in dialogue between nations.

The tasks arising for this country as a result of its membership of UNESCO have been dealt with for twenty years now by the Czech Commission for UNESCO. This, as the advisory body of the Czech government, mediates relations between our institutions and experts and UNESCO, studies UNESCO documents, spreads the ideas of the organization in the Czech Republic and presents the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris with ideas and stimuli for further activity.

The aim of this brochure is to tell you about two decades of work at the Czech Commission for UNESCO by, among other, talking about the actual activities, projects and acts in which the Commission has shared or taken patronage of. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have shared in the work of the Commission over the past twenty years. I would also thank all of those who apply and advocate the values which UNESCO stands for in their everyday lives.

Petr Gazdik
Chairman of the Czech Commission for UNESCO

20 years of cooperation with UNESCO



The Czech Republic joined the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 22nd February 1993 and in doing so continued the active work of Czechoslovakia, a founding member of the organization. Since joining, the Czech Republic has shown exceptional interest in taking part in the formulation of the programmes undertaken by the organization and taking an active role in their implementation. The Czech Commission for UNESCO and the Permanent Delegation of the Czech Republic to UNESCO have also played a crucial role in terms of strengthening cooperation.

Thanks to its work in the organization's steering committees and subsidiary bodies and the development of cooperation at national commission level, the Czech Republic has earned itself a prominent position within UNESCO. One event to have reinforced mutual cooperation was a visit paid to UNESCO headquarters in Paris by President Václav Havel in 1992, when he was awarded with the Simon Bolivar Prize.

Senator Jaroslava Moserová's term of office as President of the Czech Commission for UNESCO, when she represented the Czech Republic in the Executive Board between 1995 and 1999 and again between 2003 and 2006 and when she was elected President of the 30th General Conference (1999), was a significant time. Her active approach changed the way in which the role of the President of the GC was understood. She was tireless in her efforts to make sure that UNESCO helps developing countries, endeavours to uphold human rights and maintains its importance to developed nations. The important position of the Czech Republic at the organization was seen, among other, in the fact that the first foreign visit paid by the newly-elected General Director of UNESCO K. Matsuura in 2000 took him to Prague. The good cooperation continued between 2006 and 2012 when Prof. Helena Illnerová served as a Chairperson of the Czech Commission for UNESCO.



The above-average representation of the Czech Republic in the subsidiary bodies of owed in large part to the high level of expertise of our experts.

The Czech Commission for UNESCO initiated the creation of the Czech National Committee for Cooperation with the International Oceanographic Commission in 2006. The Czech Republic was represented in the first Governing Board of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (1999) and took part in formulating the fundamental directions of its work. We should also remember the membership of Otakar Motejl in the International Bioethics Committee (1993–1997) and the part he played in formulating the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights. Karel Komárek, Secretary-General of the Czech Commission for UNESCO, was a member of a working group involved in evaluating cooperation among the three main UNESCO organs (2004–2005) and of the important “Task Force” for UNESCO in the 21st century (1999–2000). The Czech Republic was also an active member of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin that was set up in 1978.



Experts at the Commission took an active part in the preparation and promotion of nominations of Czech monuments for inscription in the UNESCO World Heritage List and it was thanks to their expertise that twelve Czech monuments became part of this prestigious list. Neither should we forget the work of our experts in preparing new normative documents. In fact the recommendation to prepare a new, multilateral Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was made at a European regional meeting of experts held in Strážnice. It was also thanks to the efforts made by our experts and diplomats that this Convention was successfully agreed and approved within an incredibly short space of time (2003). Experts at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and the Anti-doping Committee of the Czech Republic contributed towards the formulation of the International Convention against Doping in Sport, which was adopted in 2005. The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions came into force in the Czech Republic in 2010, the first international document involving the principles and concepts of cultural diversity.

The Czech Republic provides through UNESCO highly-prized university scholarships, more than 100 students from developing countries have taken advantage of the chance to study in the Czech Republic. The tradition has been also to organize UNESCO postgraduate courses.

Czech Commission for UNESCO



The Czech Commission for UNESCO was established by a Government resolution of 1 June 1994 as the advisory body of the Government in matters concerning UNESCO and the relations to this organization.

The tasks of the Czech Commission for UNESCO:

- **It helps in the development of cooperation** between the Czech Republic and UNESCO in all areas in which this international organization is active.
- **It monitors and analyses** UNESCO activity and documents.
- **It submits proposals and recommendations** to the competent ministers and concerned institutions relating to the discharge of obligations arising for the Czech Republic from its membership of UNESCO.
- **It takes part in the preparation of proposals** of what UNESCO activity and its specific projects should focus on.
- **It informs** experts of the work done by UNESCO.
- **It helps obtain funding** from UNESCO budgets for activities implementing the organization's programmes.
- **It takes the moral patronage** over non-profit projects directly relating to the UNESCO programme.
- **It recommends candidates** for posts in the advisory bodies of the General Director and the UNESCO Secretariat.
- **It takes part in preparing the Czech Republic's participation** in the General Conference, the Executive Board and UNESCO intergovernmental committees.
- **It cooperates** with the national commissions of other member states. It was able to build excellent relations with its partner, the Slovak Commission for UNESCO, and with the commissions of other neighbouring countries Austria, Germany and Poland.

The structure of the Commission

Members of the Commission are drawn from the relevant ministries, from prominent institutions of education, science and culture and from prominent personalities from the world of Czech science and culture. Membership of the Commission is honorary and is unpaid. Members are

appointed for a four-year term of office by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic at the proposal of the ministries and relevant institutions active in the areas of work at UNESCO. The Secretary-General of the Secretariat of the Czech Commission for UNESCO is also a member of the Commission by virtue of his/her position. The Commission meets as required, at least twice a year.

The Chairman and Vice-chairmen

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic appoints the Chairman and 1st and 2nd Vice-chairman at the proposal of the Commission. The term of office of the Chairman and the Vice-chairmen is two years.



Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Czech Commission for UNESCO

Executive Committee

The work of the Czech Commission for UNESCO

between plenary sessions is governed by the Executive Committee, which is made up of representatives of Ministries and the Chairmen of subcommittees. The Executive Committee deals with the operative tasks of the Commission and acts on its behalf in those questions for which it has been expressly empowered by the Commission. The Committee also monitors the fulfilment of decisions made by the Commission.

The specialized subcommittees of the Commission:

The Commission set up three specialized bodies:

- **the subcommittee for culture;**
- **the subcommittee for the environment;**
- **the subcommittee for science, information and education.**

These specialized **subcommittees** are the advisory bodies of the Commission. They are made up of members of the Commission who show an interest in working in the relevant field and of other experts. The Chairman of the **subcommittee** is appointed by the Chairman of the Czech Commission for UNESCO from its members. A **subcommittee** may set up an “ad hoc” working group to deal with specific tasks and convene it as required.

Patronages of the Czech Commission for UNESCO



In accordance with its Statutes the Commission assumes moral patronage over non-profit projects directly linked with the UNESCO programme or with implementation of UNESCO conventions and recommendations.

The Secretariat of the Czech Commission for UNESCO

The Secretariat of the Czech Commission for UNESCO makes sure that the decisions taken by the Commission and its bodies are carried out, maintains contact with the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris and with partner national commissions. The role of the Secretariat of the Commission has been fulfilled since 1st July 1996 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic through a special unit of a UN department.



The library

The Secretariat runs a library that contains several thousand UNESCO publications and documents. A new on-line catalogue of the library was put into operation in 2011 (see <http://www.vkta.cz/unesco/baze.htm>).

The Czech Commission for UNESCO website

The Czech Commission for UNESCO website is part of the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (see www.mzv.cz/unesco).

Information bulletin

The Secretariat of the Czech Commission for UNESCO provides regular information about current happenings relating to UNESCO in its monthly Information Bulletin, which can be found at the Czech Commission for UNESCO website.

Author and photographs: Secretariat of the Czech Commission for UNESCO

ASPnet – UNESCO Associated Schools in the Czech Republic



Organizace
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Přidružené školy
UNESCO

UNESCO pays most attention to the area of education. One successful global initiative is the UNESCO Associated School Project Network – ASPnet – which was launched in 1953. The important role of coordinator of this project is played by the Secretariat of the Czech Commission for UNESCO, which

provides schools with the required information and stimuli for cooperation within the Czech network of schools and with foreign schools in the ASPnet network.

ASPnet is now a network of over 9,000 teaching facilities in more than 180 countries in all regions. The main aim of the network is to promote the ideals and principles of UNESCO in the sphere of education. Members of the network direct their pupils towards the four fundamental pillars of education – learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together.



The Czech Republic joined this worldwide project in 1966 and the number of Czech schools interested in becoming involved in the project is rising all the time. ASPnet currently has 50 members throughout the Czech Republic (16 primary schools and 34 secondary schools and colleges).

UNESCO Associated Schools concentrate on four different areas:

- a) global problems and improving knowledge of the UN system;
- b) intercultural and multicultural education;
- c) human rights and democracy;
- d) ecology and issues to concern the environment.

All schools also have as their main educational project aimed at protecting world cultural and the natural heritage.

Representatives of individual member schools meet regularly once a year at the national Annual meeting of representatives of UNESCO Associated Schools. The aim of this is primarily to exchange information, plan joint activities and set out the priorities of the national network for the forthcoming period. This meeting is always organized by one of the member schools.



The activities carried out at UNESCO Associated Schools in the Czech Republic are diverse indeed. Apart from the long-term inter-disciplinary project, which is handled specially in connection with membership of ASPnet, they devote time to their own projects within the areas mentioned above.

The schools jointly organize “UNESCO School Week in the Czech Republic”, which focuses on topics that are chosen so as to suit different types of schools in line with the UN international years.

Map of the ASPnet network in the Czech Republic



Author: Anna Martinková, ASPnet Coordinator

Photographs: Archive at the Secretariat of Czech Commission for UNESCO

List of schools involved in ASPnet network in the Czech Republic

Primary schools

- Primary School and Nursery School, Jana Broskvy 3, Brno – Chrlice
- Chýnov Primary School, Tábor district
- Primary School, Hradec Králové, tř. SNP 694
- Primary School, U Sýpek 1462, Kroměříž
- Zachar Primary School, Kroměříž,
- Žižkov Primary School
- Primary School of Art in Pardubice – Polabiny, Lonkova 510
- Pardubice Primary School, nábřeží Závodu míru 195
- Primary School, Prague 3, Lupáčova 1/1200
- Primary School, Prague 10, Nad Přehradou 469
- Primary School, Příbram VII, 28. října 1
- Primary School of Art, Rychvald, Orlovská 495,
- UNESCO Primary School, Uherské Hradiště, Komenského 350,
- Ústí nad Labem Primary School, Školní náměstí 100/5
- Zlín Primary School, Křiby 4788
- JUDr. Josef Mareš Primary School and Nursery School, Znojmo, Klášterní 2

Grammar schools and secondary schools

- EKO GYMNÁZIUM BRNO
- Gymnázium INTEGRA BRNO
- Moravské gymnázium Brno
- Saint Agnes of Bohemia Secondary School of Applied Arts, Český Krumlov, Tavírna 109
- Cheb Grammar School
- K. V. Rais Grammar School, Hlinsko, Adámkova 55
- Secondary Vocational School and Secondary Apprentice Training Centre, Hořovice, Palackého nám. 100
- Vítězslav Novák Grammar School, Jindřichův Hradec, Husova 333
- Secondary School of Glassmaking, Kamenický Šenov, Havlíčkova 57

- Gymnázium Kroměříž
- The Taufer Veterinary Secondary School in Kroměříž
- Secondary Medical School in Kroměříž
- Saint Ursula Church Grammar School, Kutná Hora
- F. X. Šalda Grammar School, Liberec 11, Partyzánská 530
- Jan Opletal Grammar School, Litovel, Opletalova 189
- Secondary Vocational School in Luhačovice
- Grammar School, Mladá Boleslav, Palackého 191/1
- Academia Mercurii, soukromá střední škola, Náchod
- Olga Havlová Grammar School, Ostrava-Poruba
- Otrokovice Grammar School
- Masaryk Grammar School, Pilsen, Petáková 2
- Grammar School, Polička, nábřeží Svobody 306
- EKO GYMNÁZIUM Praha
- Jan Neruda Grammar School, School of the City of Prague, Prague 1, Hellichova 3
- Grammar School, Příbram, Legionářů 402
- Ivan Olbracht Grammar School, Semily, Nad Špejcharem 574
- Grammar School, Třeboň, Na Sadech 308
- Grammar School in Uherské Hradiště
- Secondary School of Industry, Hotel Services and Medicine in Uherské Hradiště
- Business Academy and College in Valamšské Meziříčí
- Secondary School of Glassmaking in Valašské Meziříčí

Colleges

- Teaching College and Secondary School of Teaching, Litomyšl, Komenského nám. 22
- Police College of the Ministry of the Interior in Prague
- College and Secondary School of Agriculture, Tábor, Náměstí T. G. Masaryka 788

Education projects run by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic in Africa



The “Basic PC and Internet Course” project is the Czech Republic’s contribution to the challenge laid down at the WSIS Summit and it is a response to the call of the UN General Assembly for help in the urgent matter of resolving the problem of the “digital divide” in developing countries, mainly in Africa. The project complies with two main priorities at UNESCO – “Africa” and “Equality between men and women”.

The “Basic PC and Internet Course” project that was carried out in Nairobi, Kenya, between 3rd and 14th February 2014 under the UNESCO Participation Programme 2012–2013, was the thirteenth in a series of Czech education projects in Africa launched in January 2005.

More than 500 students, male and female, attended the “Basic PC and Internet Course” between 2005 and 2014 and African secondary schools were provided with more than 40 computer sets.

The project was carried out with the direct cooperation of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic and a local logistics partner, the African Advanced Level Telecommunications Institute (AFRALTI), a training institute with which it had carried out 6 joint “Basic PC and Internet Course” projects in the past. AFRALTI is an intergovernmental organization having its headquarters in Nairobi that brings together a number of countries throughout Africa (Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania and others) and that concentrates on the development of ICT services in Africa.



For the purposes of the project, AFRALTI provided a fully-equipped computer lab with Internet connection, took care of transport and meals for students and bought two PCs, which were dedicated to the chosen school as part of the project.

The target group of this year's project was chosen in cooperation with AFRALTI as the "Springs of Wisdom High School" from the Kikuyu district in the Nairobi area. Two groups of twenty male and female students were taught in two week-long courses. Teacher-training was also provided as part



of instruction for each group, meaning that the teachers will be able to pass on what they learned together with the students. Training in the "Basic PC and Internet Course 2014" followed a textbook created by the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, the textbook being presented to each student in the course. The basic teaching programme is based on a syllabus with a detailed description of the teaching content for each particular day. This syllabus was approved by the ITU in Geneva. The course was provided under the supervision of two Czech teachers, employees of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic.

At the beginning of the course, students were told about the theoretical fundamentals associated with ICT and PCs (the parts that make up a PC, what hardware is, the types of hardware we know, what software is, the positives and negatives of using ICT and so on).

The course subsequently focused on practical skills, such as how to switch a computer on and off properly, work with a mouse and a keyboard, the operating system and how to manage files and folders. When getting to know hardware, students also learned how to use a flash disk and how to properly care for one. All students were given their own USB flash disk as part of the project and saved the results of their work on them. The students kept the memory devices after the project for further use.

The skills students learned included operations such as opening and properly saving a file, copying and saving files in directories and other work with files, writing text, changing the type, size and colour of the font, aligning paragraphs, creating tables and setting their properties. They also learned how to add photographs to documents and modify them, something which was also used when writing a CV. These CVs were then printed out as a way of further enhancing the motivation of students and their interest in ICT.

In reaction to the rapid expansion of Internet usage lessons also covered the basics of using an Internet browser, searching for information over the Internet and using the Internet for education and communication. An e-mail account was set up for all students and the fundamentals of working with e-mail and social networks were explained. The fundamentals of security in working with the Internet and protecting privacy were also explained.



However, we consider the core part of the course concept to be students coming to understand the basic principles of using a PC, mastering the individual functions and knowing how to use a computer on their own. These qualifications will enable individual participants to develop their knowledge and skills in the future, allow them to improve their computer skills on their own using the computer sets and study materials donated, spread the experience they have gained and thus contribute towards the continual sustainability of the project.



The course was completed with a written test. All those that passed the test received a certificate of having completed the course.

The Czech Republic's "Basic PC and Internet Course" has been praised on the international stage by representatives of the UN, UNESCO and ITU and by representatives of the target countries (Kenya, Uganda, Zambia), primarily for its originality, undemanding character, effectiveness and focus on young people.

*Author: Robert Buřič, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic
Photographs: Robert Buřič, Jana Menšíková, AFRALTI*

Biosphere reserves in the Czech Republic



The objective of UNESCO's international Man and the Biosphere (MAB) project, which was launched in 1970, is to create a scientific base for the sensible use and preservation of biosphere resources and to improve relations between humans and their surroundings. The focal point in applying an innovative approach to sustainable development is the biosphere reserve (BR). These are representative areas that, apart from valuable natural ecosystems, also provide examples of harmonious relationships between the environment and the population of the biosphere reserve.



Forty years after the declaration of the first biosphere reserves, the global network now numbers 621 in 117 countries. There are currently six biosphere reserves in the Czech Republic – Třeboňsko and Křivoklátsko (declared in 1977), Šumava (1990), the Czech-Polish Krkonoše/Karkonosze (1992), Bílé Karpaty (1996) and Dolní Morava (2003).

Biosphere reserves have **three main functions**:

- 1) **to protect** the biological and cultural diversity of the area;
- 2) **to act as an example** of proper management of the countryside and provide experimental areas for permanent sustainable development;
- 3) to be **areas** in which there is intensive **research, environmental monitoring and education** for the people.



The zoning of a BR ensures its function:

- **Core areas** are protected by national legislation over the long-term to ensure that their biodiversity is maintained and that relatively undisturbed ecosystems can be monitored. Non-intrusive research and teaching can be done here. In the Czech Republic, the legal protection of the nature of core areas is ensured by the status of a specially protected area.
- **A buffer zone** surrounds or neighbours the core area and protects it from the consequences of human activity. Activities such as research, training, education and some forms of recreation can be done here and renewable sources can be used as appropriate.
- **A transition zone (area of cooperation)** provides room for various human activities. It is the ideal place for different models of sustainable development. Local communities, state institutions (including those involved in the conservation of nature), scientists, civic associations and cultural associations, private businessmen and other involved groups and individuals are able to share in activities in the area and in the development of its resources. The “biosphere reserve project” in this zone becomes well-known primarily through the cooperation of its „coordinators“ with the owners and users of the land, local authorities, science workers and others.

The activity of the MAB programme and biosphere reserves helps fulfil the aims of international conventions (Convention on the Protection of Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Bonn Convention, European directives etc.).

Sustainable development in a BR should satisfy current needs without putting at risk the chance to satisfy the needs of future generations. This assumes the rational use of renewable sources and encompasses **requirements on cultural and social development** and on the safety and equality of different areas in the world.



This conception of the BR is very attractive in its theory. Making these work in practice, however, requires foresight, imagination, endurance and the ability and effort to unite in some way very diverse groups of the population, the users and owners of the land and entrepreneurs in mutual agreement on the ways of treating the relevant area and behaving in them.

The management of the BR tries to get the locals involved (municipalities, clubs, governmental and non-governmental organizations, entrepreneurs etc.) and to get them to take part and provide support in activities that can be done in the name of MAB. The term biosphere reserve is not a separate legal term in the Czech Republic, which is a weakness and a strength that allows for considerable flexibility and puts new thoughts into practical life in various contexts.



Each BR has (in a different form) a coordination unit that initiate various activities and that provide information and assistance to the benefit of the people and biosphere in the relevant area.

The registered offices of administration units of individual Czech biosphere reserves:

- BR Třeboňsko: Administration Unit of the Třeboňsko Protected Landscape Area
- BR Křivoklátsko: Administration Unit of the Křivoklátsko Protected Landscape Area
- BR Šumava: Administration Unit of the Šumava National Park and Protected Landscape Area, together with Regionální rozvojová agentura Šumava,
- BR Krkonoše/Karkonosze: Administration Unit of the Krkonoše Mountains National Park
- BR Bílé Karpaty: Administration Unit of the Bílé Karpaty Protected Landscape Area
- BR Dolní Morava: Biosférická rezervace Dolní Morava

Author: Eva Jelínková, Czech National Committee of the UNESCO Programme Man and Biosphere (MAB)

Photographs: Jan Ševčík

Geoparks in the CR



národní geopark

The geoparks initiative, dedicated to the legacy of Planet Earth, was launched at the beginning of the 3rd millennium. The idea of these parks is to help the general public understand how continental shift, volcanic activity, iceberg activity and climate change have shaped and continue to shape the landscape, its cultural heritage and mineral wealth. A geopark is a geologically important area having a population that is large enough to be able to implement sustainable development. It presents the geological and geomorphological heritage, for example erosion, the remnants of volcanic activity, paleontological discoveries, the remnants of extracting minerals, and related traces of culture and history in the countryside.

Geoparks are one of the ways of responsibly protecting and using the heritage of Planet Earth. They are not protected areas in the sense of the law, but an initiative launched by local and regional institutions and supported by the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic to an extent that matches its earnestness and professionalism.

A geopark is an expression of the intention of civil society to take responsibility for the development of its countryside – to protect, present, experience and use its geological and other related landscape heritage and to add value to this legacy so that there is no need to feel ashamed before our children or grandchildren.



transporters, restaurateurs, small-scale farmers and so on.

Geoparks promote scientific research and cooperation with universities and research institutes. They stimulate dialogue between scientists and locals, who play a fundamental role in geoparks because they share in their creation and running in different ways. The people that live in the area then present their areas to visitors and are employed in geoparks as guides, manufacturers of local products, craftsmen, artists, hoteliers,

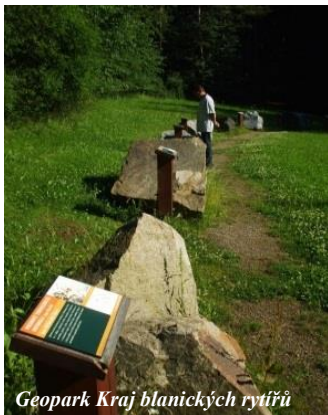
A geopark is an area with the potential to develop sustainable tourism through what is known as geotourism and other forms of considerate tourism, such as ecotourism, agrotourism and ethnotourism.



A network of national geoparks has been set up in the Czech Republic, following the example of other national networks of geoparks in Europe and the world. This network will grow over time to include other national geoparks created in the Czech Republic and to allow for the creation of joint projects, the regular exchange of information and sharing of practical experience, the sharing of websites, the use of common logos etc.

The operation of the network falls within the remit of the National Geoparks Board, the advisory body to the Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic that, among other, discusses and evaluates any applications lodged for the declaration of a national geopark. This Board is made up of members of the competent ministries, academic workplaces and educational institutions.

Geopark Český ráj, which became a national geopark in 2010 together with Geopark Egeria (Karlovy Vary region), became a member of the Network of European Geoparks and of the Network of Global Geoparks under the patronage of UNESCO in October 2005. Geopark Železné hory and Geopark GeoLocí (Tachov area) also became national geoparks in April 2012. Geopark Kraj blanických rytířů and Geopark Podbeskydí, meanwhile, focus on the earthy subject of “The Carpathians – Stone and Life” and are currently undergoing the certification process required to become national geoparks.



Another four geoparks are at advanced stages of the process: Joachim Barrande Geopark and its world renowned paleontology, Geopark Vysočina, with its granite phenomena and more, Geopark Jeseníky, with its magical landscape and its enchanted past, and Geopark Ralsko, with its motto of “Land of extinct

communities, iron ore and sandstone without barriers". The governing bodies of national and candidate geoparks work closely with representatives of the regions and communities that lie within their areas. National Geopark Egeria is also involved in cooperation with Bavarian representatives of the cross-border Bohemian-Bavarian Geopark.

The basic principles and conditions of the creation, development and functioning of national geoparks are laid down in the Charter of National Geoparks of the Czech Republic. These principles include the active involvement of locals in geopark activity and popularization and education in geology and other environmental disciplines. They also encompass issues of protecting and maintaining geological sites, not in the legislative sense, but in terms of active work that uses educational, economic and other tools, such as all-terrain technical tools. This relates to the only restriction found within the Charter of National Geoparks of the Czech Republic, meaning zero tolerance of the destruction, damaging and sale of geological material, in particular gemstones and fossils.



The development of the concept of geoparks should lead, among other, to a deeper understanding of development and to greater respect for the significance of all domains and processes of the planet, and consequently to a more sustainable approach to using its heritage. The strong cultural and natural identity of the people is one of the fundamental pillars on which a healthy relationship with the landscape in which they live is built. People often develop a relationship to the countryside by associating attractive natural phenomena with cultural artefacts. This combination helps build a bond with the countryside, whether as part of day-to-day work, religious practices and common customs or when travelling around in search of the joy of getting to know the area.

Author: Martina Pásková, Ministry of the Environment of the Czech Republic

Photographs: Martina Pásková, Jiří Adamovič (Institute of Geology, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic)

Documentary heritage – Memory of the World



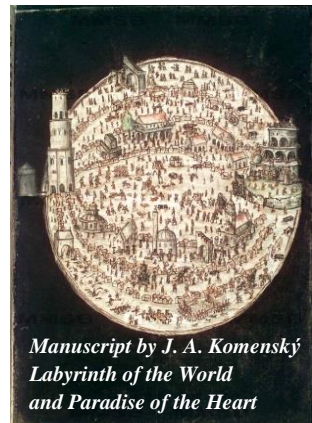
UNESCO's Memory of the World project was launched in 1992 with the aim of promoting the preservation and maintenance of the cultural heritage recorded in documents of all kinds, whether they be manuscripts, printed publications, electronic publications and digital data, archive materials, audio and video recordings or films.

The Czech Republic has been active in this programme through its National Library since the very beginning, supporting it with six pilot projects. Indeed the publication in 1993 of a list of the most treasured documents at the library and visual representations on CD ROM was the very

first successfully completed project in the programme in the world. The project went down in the annals of history of the programme as the Prague Project and was followed by others, including the first comprehensive publication of manuscripts in 1995, catalogues of Persian and Arabian manuscripts and last, but not least, a recommendation for digitalization, which was published in its definitive form together with the relevant software and standards in 1999 and approved in the same year by UNESCO as a specimen recommendation for making the documentary heritage available.

Strong support from the National Library of the Czech Republic was also demonstrated, and continues to be so, in the work of the International Advisory Committee, to which a member of our institute was appointed in 1997 – 2000 and again from 2013, working in its sub-committee for technology in the meantime.

The activity of the Czech National Library in the field of protecting and making available the cultural documentary heritage and its close cooperation with UNESCO resulted in 2005 in receiving of the just established UNESCO Jikji Memory of the World Prize.



Work on the Memory of the World programme was the initial impulse to digitalize library documents in the Czech Republic. It is natural, therefore, that the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic has declared its support for the digitalization of manuscripts and old printings within this UNESCO programme with its *National Programme of Digital Access to Treasured Documents Memoriae Mundi Series Bohemica* without interruption since the year 2000.

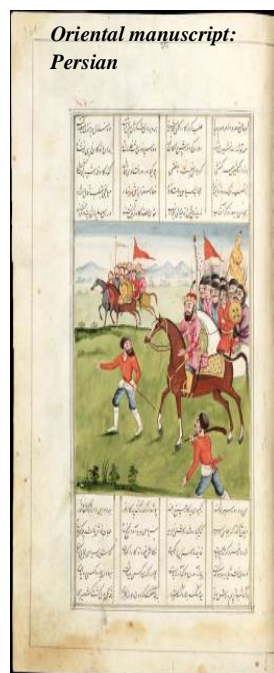


Arab map of the world from the 15th century

These were then made accessible in the Manuscriptorium (www.manuscriptorium.eu) library in 2003, the library having become the largest European digital library of manuscripts, in which more than fifty Czech institutes present their funds using a unique technical solution, together with more than seventy foreign institutes.

The launch of the Register of the Memory of the World Programme practically came in 1997 with the first entries. Three collections of the National Library of the Czech Republic have thus far been entered in the register (a collection of medieval manuscripts from the Czech reformation, a collection of periodicals of Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian emigration from 1918–1945 and the Prague collection of 526 university theses that heralded important argumentation on the grounds of the Faculty of Philosophy), as has a collection of Czech and Slovak Samizdat periodicals from 1948 to 1989 of the Libri Prohibiti Library.

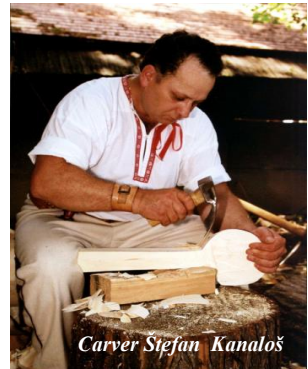
The National Library has recently lent its support to the creation of a sub-committee for education and research and has taken part in preparations for the establishment of the Regional Committee of the Memory of the World Programme for Europe.



*Author: Adolf Knoll, National Library of the Czech Republic
Photographs: Manuscriptorium digital library*

Folk Tradition Bearers

The “Folk Tradition Bearers” system is a project through which the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic contributes towards achieving the principles of the “Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore“ document issued at the 25th UNESCO General Conference in 1989.



The actual content of the project is inspired by a UNESCO pilot project entitled “Living Human Treasures”, the aim of which is to create a comprehensive programme of care to prevent the disappearance of endangered phenomena of traditional culture and their bearers.

In the Czech Republic, this project took the form of systematic care for traditional production technology and those who are experts in it. A system was created in 2000 under the name of Folk Tradition Bearers, the aim of which is to recognize producers with a technical mastery of unique forms of technology used in folk production that are at risk of extinction and to let the public know about them. In addition to preserving this technology, they also take an active part in promoting and passing on production techniques to their pupils and successors.



The Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic has, since the inception of the project, recognized more than fifty producers from across the board of traditional production technology. Among them we can number potters, smiths, carvers, hatchet men, weavers, embroiderers, basket makers, cobblers and a unique stone grinder maker.

The title of Folk Tradition Bearer is presented every year on the prestigious occasion of the national launch of European Cultural Heritage Days in the Czech Republic.



Opening of the Homo Faber exhibition in Paris, attended by General Director of UNESCO Koichiro Matsuura

was attended by UNESCO Director-General and Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic.

The exhibition also involved practical examples of production, creative workshops and a screening of the work of all award-winners. The deserved attention the exhibition enjoyed in France continued after its return home. It was installed in the Músaion building of the National Museum in Prague, followed by the Czech Centre in Warsaw and a whole host of other museums and galleries in the Czech Republic.



Weaving with thin strips of wood, Milan Macho

The aim of the Folk Tradition Bearers project is not, of course, simply to publicly recognize individual producers. We also aim to promote and put on view traditional crafts and the products made so that they can again become part of everyday culture – inside buildings, on clothing and in everyday goods.

Only in this way can we guarantee that they will continue to be a living part of our culture and not merely interesting museum exhibits.

Author and photographer: Martin Šimša, National Institute of Folk Architecture

Intangible cultural heritage in the Czech Republic

The Ride of the Kings, Shrovetide, Easter rattling, building a maypole, embroidery, crafts, folk healing, puppetry, fairy tales and round dances: the list of ceremonies, knowledge, skills and expressions of spoken, musical and dance-related folklore and interpretative art is almost endless. In contrast to tangible monuments, the intangible cultural heritage cannot be taken in your hands. Its inner dimensions and laws are hard to grasp – they must be experienced. In this respect, the Czech Republic is truly blessed with riches for which its people care, continually reshape and develop.



Evidence for this comes from the Czech Republic's accession to UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Although preservation of the spiritual legacy of this country was systematically ongoing at the time of ratification of the Convention, it was nonetheless given a new dimension and direction. It is thanks to this that the state supports research, documentation and promotion of the preservation of cultural elements through the National Institute of Folk Culture, a network of authorized regional workplaces and many other institutions.

There are several aspects to intangible culture: spoken traditions and expressions, interpretative art, customs, ceremonies, celebrations, traditional folk understanding and experience to concern nature and space, knowledge and skills associated with traditional crafts. The most important of these are entered in the List of the Intangible Heritage of Traditional Folk Culture of the Czech Republic. Some of the elements on the list could, with regard to their uniqueness and deep roots, even reach the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.



At this time, the national list of traditional folk culture has nine entries. **Verbuňk** – a solo male dance from the Slovácko area that is an important cultural custom in the region, mainly at traditional feasts. The dance was probably originally associated with military enlistment. During the dance, men were able to show off their skilfulness, physical proficiency and creativity.

As another colourful point on the map of the Slovácko area, the communities of Hluk, Kunovice, Skoronice and Vlčnov regularly revive the **Ride of the Kings**, a procession on horses decorated with colourful paper flowers. This ceremony was once linked to Pentecost. A flag-bearer, town criers, excise men and other riders ride through the community with the king – a young man attired in traditional female festive attire, protected by aides. The riders address onlookers and the inhabitants of the village with special *cries*, collecting gifts for the king.

Village Shrovetide processions and costumes in the Hlinec area are representatives of a large number of the Shrovetide customs you can see throughout the Czech Republic. There are some unique characters that are stable parts of the *masquerade* – chimney sweeps, Turks, straw men, Jews, dog catchers, mares and other traditional figures, while the nature of the procession and the way in which the people wearing the individual costumes behave is also traditional.



Shrovetide in the Hlinec area

One intangible heritage shared by many nations is that of **falconry**, the art of breeding birds of prey, protecting them, training them and hunting with them. The history of falconry stretches back 4,000 years and began in Central Asia. In the past, falconers mainly used birds of prey for hunting. Nowadays, falconry is considered a hobby that brings together humans with nature and deepens its understanding.

Another activity associated with getting to know the natural habitat is **game keeping** – planned, continual and sustainable management of wild animals and their surroundings. Game keeping is something that involves knowledge of the wild and efforts to achieve equilibrium in the ecosystem.

A significant element of the intangible culture is the **Moravian Wallachian folk dance**, another solo dance for men, this time from North Moravia. The folk dance, known as “odzemek”, is linked to the pastoral culture. It is maintained in Wallachia in a living form, providing its bearers with an important feeling of solidarity and identity that has disappeared from a number of other folk dances.

There are now only a few places in the Czech Republic where you can see the **procession of Judas** at Easter time, a custom traditional for the Czech White Saturday. It is upheld to this day mostly in the Pardubice region. On White Saturday young men walk through the community with Judas, a boy in a costume made of straw or hay, singing traditional Easter songs. The costume is then ceremonially burned at the end.



The procession of Judas

An entirely different category in the national list is that of **East Bohemian puppetry**, the history of which in the Czech lands dates back to the second half of the 18th century, when roving puppeteers wandered the land. These



East Bohemian puppetry



puppeteers were also important in spreading professional dramatic work to the masses, even though they performed mainly for children. Puppetry is now a widespread phenomenon that builds on the tradition of a range of modern forms, both professional and amateur.

Then there is **Barchan**, a custom upheld in the town of Jemnice. The run of four messengers recalls the time Jan Lucemburský sent a message from a military campaign to his wife, Eliška Přemyslovna, whom he had left behind the walls of Jemnice. The queen rewarded the messengers with a fustian fingers protector, a scarf, stockings and a garland.

Author: Eva Románková, National Institute of Folk Culture
Photographs: Archive of the National Institute of Folk Culture

World Heritage Monuments in the Czech Republic



The most distinctive part of cooperation in the sphere of immovable cultural heritage is based on fulfilment of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, to which Czechoslovakia acceded in 1991 and whose commitments the Czech Republic continues to fulfil.

The elements of world heritage are those natural sites and cultural monuments and protected monument zones that are, during the process of evaluation, recognized as having certain characteristics that lend them a unique global value, meaning they can be entered in the UNESCO World Heritage List in accordance with the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

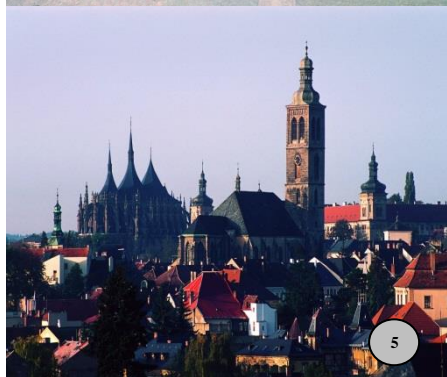
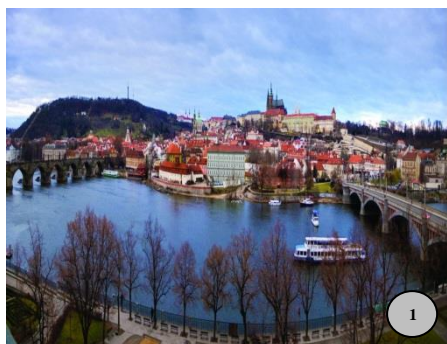
The National Heritage Institute (NHI), as a public institution carries out a range of tasks within the scope of activity of the Ministry of Culture in relation to world heritage. Some world heritage sites are directly managed by the institute, meaning that they are provided with the maximum professional care.

The NHI also harmonizes care for world heritage and provides methodical assistance to its owners and administrators in terms of meeting the requirements arising from their important international standing. The NHI also compiles comprehensive information about the condition of such monuments in line with the requirements of the Ministry of Culture and the World Heritage Centre and proposes measures to ensure its improvement. It therefore takes part in the regular and reactive monitoring of these monuments.

The NHI acts as a partner in a number of municipal, region and private projects that are prepared and carried out with the support of a significant grant programme known as Support for UNESCO Monuments, which has been run by the Ministry of Culture since 2008 and thanks to which the world cultural heritage in the Czech Republic has been able to achieve results relating to expertise and presentations for the general public among a variety of target groups.

Author: Věra Kučová, National Heritage Institute

Photographs: UNESCO Czech Heritage



1. **The historic centre of Prague** (1992) – a legacy of two parts – the Historic Centre of Prague and Průhonice Park
2. **The historic centre of Český Krumlov** (1992)
3. **The historic centre of Telč** (1992)
4. **The Church of St. John of Nepomuk at Zelená hora near Žďár nad Sázavou** (1994)
5. **Kutná Hora: historic centre, with the Church of St. Barbara and the Cathedral of Our Lady in Sedlec** (1995)
6. **The cultural landscape of Lednice-Valtice** (1996)



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7. **The Holašovice village monument reserve (1998)**
8. **Gardens and castle in Kroměříž (1998)**
9. **Litomyšl Castle (1999)**
10. **Column of the Holy Trinity in Olomouc (2000)**
11. **The Tugendhat Villa in Brno (2001)**
12. **The Jewish Quarter and the Basilica of St. Procopius in Třebíč (2003)**