

## General Information



## KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THE CZECH REPUBLIC

**Capital:** Prague

**Official Language:** Czech

**Population:** 10.88 million (2025)<sup>1</sup>

**Currency:** Czech koruna (CZK)

**Calling Code:** +420

## KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

**GDP per capita:** 36,436 euro (2025)<sup>2</sup>

**Real GDP growth:** 2.6 % (2024–2025)<sup>3</sup>

**Unemployment rate in July 2025<sup>4</sup>:** 3 %

## Statistics and Demographics

Total number of volunteers: 1.66 million (2023)<sup>5</sup>

Volunteering rate: 19.2% of population aged 15+

(2024)<sup>6</sup>

Annual economic value: 1.4 billion euro (2024)



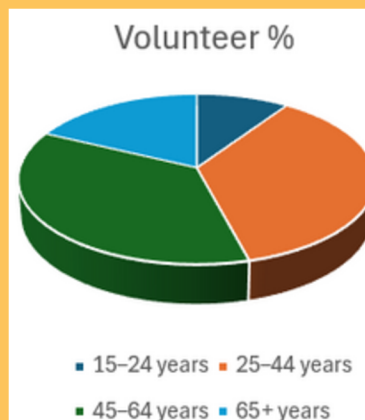
## GENDER ANALYSIS (2023)

Women volunteer at a higher rate of 21.4 %, compared to 16.9 % for men, resulting in a gender gap of 4.5 percentage points favoring female participation. Women make up 57.2 % of all volunteers, while men constitute 42.8 %. Although women participate more frequently, men who do volunteer tend to report higher average numbers of volunteer hours. This gender pattern has shown a steady narrowing over time, with the gap decreasing from 10 percentage points in 2004 to 4.5 in 2023.

## AGE DISTRIBUTION (2023)

- **15–24 years:** 10.5 % of age group, 9.5 % of volunteer population
- **25–44 years:** 28.8 % of age group, 36.3 % of volunteer population
- **45–64 years:** 24.0 % of age group, 36.2 % of volunteer population
- **65+ years:** 13.4 % of age group, 17.9 % of volunteer population

Further analysis of the latest measurement shows that if we export the group 18–30 y.o., it shows significant volunteer power: 20.5 % of this age group.



## DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is basically defined as the free and unpaid contribution of time and skills by individuals to benefit society and the environment. Under Act No. 198/2002 Coll. on Volunteer Service<sup>7</sup>, volunteer activity excludes family-based tasks, work for financial gain, or legally mandated obligations. Following the crisis of past years and the reactions of civil society there is ongoing discussion regarding informal volunteering categorization.

## SOCIAL CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer rates in Czechia have risen steadily since the 1989 democratic transition. In 2023, 19.2 % of adults volunteered, reflecting one of three citizens contributing to civic life. Volunteering played a central role in crisis responses – from COVID-19 relief to flood and Ukrainian refugee assistance – solidifying its importance in social cohesion and community resilience, especially in terms of informal volunteering.

## Motivation for Volunteering

Czech volunteers are driven by a blend of altruism and self-actualization. In 2023, 6 in 10 volunteers (60.4 %) were motivated primarily by helping others, while nearly the same proportion (58.7 %) found enjoyment in their volunteer roles – a significantly higher rate than the EU average of 40.7 %. The opportunity to acquire new skills attracted 39.9 % of respondents, and community engagement motivated 43.0 %, compared to 32.2 % across Europe. These data underscore a distinct Czech tendency to seek not only meaningful social impact but also personal growth and enjoyment through volunteering.

## Types of Volunteer Activities

In 2023, volunteering in the Czech Republic was nearly evenly split between organized (56.6%, 941,100 people) and unorganized (43.4%, 721,200 people) participation. Organized volunteering mainly occurs in non-profit, charitable, or church organizations (30.2%) and state or municipal bodies (15.0%), with smaller shares in informal communities, workplaces, and others. Unorganized volunteering includes efforts initiated by volunteers themselves (27.4%) or by those being helped (12.9%). Key organizations include the Czech Catholic Charity (over 200 facilities and 50,000 volunteers), HESTIA - National Volunteer Centre, Diaconia ECCB, and ADRA Czech Republic. Volunteers mostly engage in community development (23.7%), social care (23.5%), and environmental protection (17.5%). Emergency aid and sports activities account for smaller shares, with other sectors making up the rest.

1. <https://csu.gov.cz/rychle-informace/pohyb-obyvatelestva-1-pololeti-2025>

2. <https://csu.gov.cz/souhrnna-data-o-ceske-republice?pocet=10&start=0&skupiny=32&razeni=-datumVydani>

3. <https://csu.gov.cz/rychle-informace/tvorba-a-uziti-hdp-2-ctvrtleti-2025>

4. <https://csu.gov.cz/rychle-informace/miry-zamestnanosti-nezamestnanosti-a-ekonomicke-aktivity-cervenec-2025>

5. [https://csu.gov.cz/docs/107508/6defcc25-1d53-e14c-4c29-dffe7b522ee2/990283-24\\_en.pdf?version=1.0](https://csu.gov.cz/docs/107508/6defcc25-1d53-e14c-4c29-dffe7b522ee2/990283-24_en.pdf?version=1.0)

6. [https://ustavstem.sharepoint.com/sites/work\\_share/Sdilen%20dokumenty/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fwork%5Fshare%2Fsdilen%20dokumenty%2Fweb%2F2438%5FDonio%5Findex%5Fsolidarity%2Findex%5Fsolidarity%5Fpodroba%5Fzprava%5Ffin%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Fwork%5Fshare%2Fsdilen%20dokumenty%2Fweb%2F2438%5FDonio%5Findex%5Fsolidarity&p=true&ga=17](https://ustavstem.sharepoint.com/sites/work_share/Sdilen%20dokumenty/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fwork%5Fshare%2Fsdilen%20dokumenty%2Fweb%2F2438%5FDonio%5Findex%5Fsolidarity%2Findex%5Fsolidarity%5Fpodroba%5Fzprava%5Ffin%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2Fwork%5Fshare%2Fsdilen%20dokumenty%2Fweb%2F2438%5FDonio%5Findex%5Fsolidarity&p=true&ga=17)

7. <https://mv.gov.cz/clanek/dobrovolnicka-sluzba-864979.aspx>



## Institutional and Legal Framework for Volunteering in Czech Republic

The Czech volunteering framework is governed mainly by Act No. 198/2002 Coll., regulating accredited volunteering programs and ensuring volunteer rights, insurance, and fiscal benefits. Accredited volunteering is formally structured through signed agreements and monitored by the Ministry of the Interior. Simultaneously, informal volunteering remains widespread but outside statutory regulation. Sectoral laws intersect with the Volunteer Service Act to govern social care, health, and educational volunteering activities. Despite comprehensive legislation covering accredited projects, many volunteers operate in unregulated contexts, highlighting a continuing challenge in encompassing the full spectrum of volunteer engagement within legal frameworks.

## Challenges to the Development of Volunteering in Czech Republic

Firstly, in spite of the positive volunteer trends in Czechia, geographic disparities remain. Formal volunteer programs cluster in major cities, while many rural regions and peripheral communities are left behind reliant on informal or neighbor-to-neighbor initiatives. Second, digital coordination gaps hinder both recruitment and management. In the Czech Republic, less than 6% of volunteers participated in online volunteering as of 2023, reflecting limited digital engagement compared to some European counterparts. Third, financing pressures weigh heavily on small NGOs. Finally, the absence of standardized impact measurement limits evidence-based planning and advocacy. Fewer than 20 % of organizations systematically collect outcome data, relying instead on anecdotal reports that fail to capture the full social and economic value of their work.

Despite growing volunteer engagement in Czechia, challenges persist: urban-rural disparities, digital inequality, financial and administrative burdens (specially in small NGOs) and a lack of systematization in measurement of the volunteer impact.

## Measuring the Impact of Volunteering

Volunteering in the Czech Republic generates substantial economic and social returns. In 2024 alone, volunteers contributed work valued at CZK 34 billion – equivalent to 95 000 full-time jobs – by donating over 450 million hours of service. Beyond its economic impact and apart from general society gains of volunteering, Czech volunteers underpin community resilience, because they were instrumental in pandemic relief, flood response, and support for Ukrainian refugees.



## Financial Support for the Development of Volunteering in Czech Republic

Financial backing for Czech volunteering operates through a multi-layered funding system combining national, EU, and private resources. The Ministry of the Interior serves as the national authority with a grant program allocation of 544,000 euro to 158 accredited projects in 2025. Apart from that there is a significant amount of international support (mainly EU funds), municipal grants and private foundations with conservative estimate around 40 million euro annually. About half of this amount consists of a combination of EU funding and Active Citizens Fund. There are many challenges however, including the administrative complexity and lack of fundraising skills, which strain smaller NGOs and underscore gaps in long-term financial sustainability and access, especially outside urban centers.

## Trends in the Development of Volunteering in Czech Republic

Recent data from the Czech Statistical Office reveals a dynamic volunteering landscape characterized by a nearly even split between organized (56.6 %) and informal (43.4 %) volunteering. The sector experienced significant growth in crisis-related volunteering, notably during the COVID-19 pandemic, the flood response, and Ukrainian refugee support efforts, but these are often “come and go” trends. Youth environmental engagement is particularly strong, with about 40% of young volunteers actively participating in environmental initiatives. Corporate volunteering is gaining ground, although precise data on its scale remains sparse. Overall evolution follows the European trends toward more episodic, self-growth based as well as crisis response volunteering models.

## The Volunteer Awards



The Křesadlo ("Flint & Steel")<sup>1</sup> Award is the leading national recognition for exceptional volunteers in the Czech Republic, established by HESTIA in 2001. The award is presented annually in over 18 cities and regions across the country, with 10 volunteers per region recognized each year. Nominations are submitted by NGOs and individual citizens, with winners selected by an expert commission representing civil society, media, and public administration. The ceremony serves both as public recognition and an inspiration for broader civic involvement. Awardees receive a symbolic flint-and-steel, representing the spark they bring to civic life.

## Key Stakeholders in the Development of Volunteering

Volunteer development in the Czech Republic involves a network of governmental, civil society, and supporting actors working collaboratively. The Ministry of the Interior is the principal authority, responsible for volunteering policy, legal framework implementation (including Act No. 198/2002 on Volunteer Service), program accreditation, and funding administration. The government's Council for NGOs coordinates cross-sectoral strategies. Other ministries, such as Education (youth programs, European Solidarity Corps), Health (hospital and care volunteering), Culture, and Labor and Social Affairs, provide targeted support. Civil society leadership is concentrated in organizations like HESTIA, which provides training, methodology, and coordinates regional volunteer centers, alongside major networks such as the Czech Catholic Charity and Diaconia ECCB. Regional centers and local NGOs, together with corporate partners and academia, contribute to a robust volunteer ecosystem.



## Research in the Field of Volunteering

Czechia's volunteering research infrastructure has matured over the past three decades, anchored by HESTIA's methodological studies since 1993, the Czech Statistical Office's regular national surveys and the STEM Institute's attitude surveys. Academic centers at Charles University's Civil Society Studies and Masaryk University's Centre for Nonprofit Sector Research contribute interdisciplinary analyses, including economic valuations and motivational studies. Current trends focus on digital transformation, crisis-response efficacy, and SDG integration, guiding Czech volunteering toward evidence-based policies and professionalized management.

1. <https://www.hest.cz/kresadlo/>