



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

22.01.2024 / 17:01 | Aktualizováno: 22.01.2024 / 17:04

Based on frequently asked questions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic presents the following recommendations to use the short name "Česko/Czechia" in international context.



In this text, we explain when to use the short form “Czechia” [check-i-ya] [tʃɛkiə] when presenting the Czech Republic abroad.

1. Distinction between short and formal country names

First of all, it is important to remember that **both the short** (geographical) name and the **formal** (political) name serve as **official names** of the given country. In the case of the Czech state, the formal name is “the Czech Republic” (“*Česká republika*” in Czech) and the short form Czechia (“*Česko*” in Czech) stands as its equivalent. Both names are listed in the relevant UN databases.

2. Legal basis for a country’s short name

The basis for the recognition of short forms of country names in the international community is a completed process of their national standardisation under the applicable laws of the country in question. **Pursuant to Section 4 of Act No. 200/1994 Coll.** (the Surveying Act), the Czech Office for Surveying, Mapping and the Land Registry (CUZK), with its expert Nomenclature Committee is the authority competent to **standardise the names** of geographical objects (settlements and natural landmarks). The one-word name “*Česko*” and its language mutations (including the English “Czechia”) were already standardised in 1993 (“*Names of States and their Territorial Parts*”, 1993, CUZK).

While the Czech name “*Česko*” gradually came into informal use after the break-up of the former Czechoslovakia, foreign-language translations of this name were absent from nomenclature databases for over twenty years. The Czech Government remedied this on 2 May 2016 with its Resolution No. 403, on the addition of foreign-language translations of the short form “*Česko*” to the relevant UN databases. These are the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) and the United Nations Terminology Database (UNTERM). The Government resolution confirmed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ intention to initiate the process of notifying the country’s short name to the UN Secretariat. The short form was then added to the relevant databases of the EU and NATO and of other international organisations, such as the OSCE and the OECD.

3. In what contexts should the short name be used as opposed to formal name?

The short name “Czechia” (and its translations to all languages) is just as correct as the formal name “the Czech Republic” (and its translations to all languages), but the functional distinction and the context of use of the two forms must be considered in each case. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommends using the following simple rule when referring to the country abroad:

The short form “Czechia” should be used where the formal name “the Czech Republic” is not required.

3.1 In which specific cases is it **necessary** to use the formal (political) name of a country?

- in international treaties and other official documents, such as Memoranda of Understanding, **where the formal name is used by other countries** (contracting parties).

3.2 It is therefore **appropriate** to use the **SHORT** country name:

- **wherever other countries use the short name**, for example in lists of international organisations’ member states on websites and on nameplates in conference rooms;
- **wherever people naturally use short names for other countries;**
- in events relating to commerce and economy (international exhibitions, trade fairs, trade and destination marketing of the country);
- for cultural, social, scientific, sports (see below), economic and other presentation of the country, and also, for example, in non-ceremonial speeches given by political representatives;
- when introducing people representing cultural, social, scientific, sports, economic or other interests of the country;
- in informal communication, correspondence, literary works and newspaper articles, media interviews, geographical materials (maps, atlases);
- on social media;
- in materials that present the achievements, history and important people of the country;
- in press materials of private entities, their promotional prints, etc.

4. Which name to opt for in cases where the above guidance is not sufficient?

In that case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommends following the practice of other developed countries, especially those of the European Union. Whenever most other countries use the short name of their country, it is correct to use “Czechia”. In contrast, where most other countries use the formal name, it is appropriate to use the name “the Czech Republic”.

5. What is the recommendation for using the short name in sports settings?

The achievements of Czech athletes are an important part of Czechia’s international presentation. The short-form country names are generally used in sports, while formal names are not (the only exception being the few countries that do not have a short name, which is not the case of Czechia). The short name “Czechia” has already been adopted by Czech sports associations and the Czech Olympic Committee, and are used in international competitions.

5.1 Where is it appropriate to use the *FORMAL* (political) name of a country in a sports environment?

- in international sports treaties, **where the formal name is used by other countries** (contracting parties).

5.2 The *SHORT* form of a country name should therefore be used in particular:

- on sports gear, apparel and jerseys;
- in competition results and score sheets;
- in sports commentaries and media interviews;
- on the nameplates of the Czech associations’ representatives in conference rooms;
- on social media;
- on websites;
- wherever other countries also use their short names.

6. How does the short name “Česko” officially translate into foreign languages?

The official translations of the word “Česko” (or “Česká republika”) into all global languages cannot possibly be listed in one place. The following translations have been notified to the UN databases:

Language	Short name
Czech	Česko
English	Czechia
French	Tchéquie (la)
Spanish	Chequia
Russian	Чехия
Arabic	تشيكيا
Chinese	捷克