CZECH REPUBLIC: 2002

The Czech Republic is a landlocked country, lying in the central part of Europe in the middle of the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere.

The country's borders make up neighbourhood with Poland (761.8 km), Germany (810.3 km), Austria (466.3 km) and Slovakia (251.8 km).

The major European watershed passes through the territory of the Czech Republic to separate the basins of the North, Baltic and Black Seas. Principal rivers are the *Labe* (370 km) and the *Vltava* (433 km) in Bohemia, the *Morava* (246 km) and the *Dyje* (306 km) in Moravia, and the *Odra* (135 km) and the *Opava* (131 km) in Silesia and northern Moravia.

The Czech Republic can be found on the borderline of two mountain systems. The western and central parts of the country are occupied by the hilly uplands *Česká vysočina* and by the low mountain ranges *Šumava, Český les, Krušné hory, Krkonoše, Orlické hory,* and J*eseníky* . The *Západní Karpaty* mountains (*Beskydy)* penetrate into the eastern part of the country.

The climate of the Czech Republic is affected by the interaction of oceanic and continental effects. Western winds prevail and intensive cyclone type activities frequently change air masses and bring rather heavy precipitation. The maritime effect is mainly felt in Bohemia, continental climate effects have a bigger impact on Moravia and Silesia. Altitude and relief influence the climate to a large extent. 52 817 km^2 of the country's whole territory (66.97%) can be found at an altitude below 500 m, 25 222 km^2 (31.68%) between 500 to 1 000 m, and only 827 km^2 above 1 000 m. The average altitude of the Czech Republic is 430 m.

The fauna and flora found in the country also testify to the mutual penetration of principal directions in which fauna and flora have propagated in Europe. Forests, mostly coniferous, cover 33% of the total area.

The soil cover is also varied. Brown soils are the most prevalent soil type in the Czech Republic.

TEMPORARY LOCATION OF THE CZSO INFORMATION SERVICES UNIT Praha 1, Josefská 6