



# Czechia



A COUNTRY ON THE COAST

AHOJ!





The Czech Republic is applying to be the guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2026. By doing so we are following on from 2019, when the Czech Republic was the main guest country at the Leipzig Book Fair and successfully presented the Czech culture industry to the whole world.

This project is sponsored and organized by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic together with the Moravian Library in Brno, the Czech Literary Centre/CzechLit, and other institutions which have long supported Czech culture, in particular the translation, publication and presentation of Czech literature abroad.

The theme and key metaphor of our presentation at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2026 is “Czechia – a country on the coast.”

This publication contains the clearly defined objectives of the project and a summarized presentation in logically structured chapters, including a detailed budget.

WE WISH YOU PLEASANT READING AND HOPE  
TO SEE YOU IN FRANKFURT/MAIN IN 2026!

# Content

2	Summary
4	Introduction
6	Objectives
10	Theme & Key Metaphor
14	The Book Trade & Public Support of Literature
24	Czech Literature in Translation
34	Writers & Their Literature
42	Czech Cultural Activities Abroad and in the Global Book Market
48	CzechTourism
50	Czech–German Common Interests
54	The Conception of the Guest-of-Honour Project
60	Dramaturgical Board
66	Budget

# Introduction



Culture has always played an important role in the external relationships of every country. This is because it easily transcends borders and clearly communicates the intellectual and material values which form the identity of all developed nations. Countries can use their own cultural wealth to engage in a dialogue with one another, which leads to better mutual understanding. Culture contributes in a fundamental way to establishing international political and economic relationships, while strengthening those which already exist.

Our creative activities represent a separate branch of the economy, the significance of which continues to grow. Already today its financial contribution and usefulness for all of society is greater than a number of traditional industries, while through its activities the culture industry also inspires and stimulates many other sectors. The Czech Republic's (Czechia) cultural projects abroad are aimed at the wider public of that particular country and help to raise Czechia's profile. Moreover, participation in cultural events abroad opens up new areas of activity for individuals and

groups. Culture acts as a strong integrational element that strengthens national identity, which also allows for the promotion and maintenance of active contacts with ex-patriot communities.

With its rich cultural heritage and dynamic present, the promotion of Czechia's culture abroad helps it to be viewed internationally as an up-and-coming country with great partner potential.

The world of literature is a space where we can meet and inspire one another. It is vitally important for the artistic development of every writer to find out about the world, to get to know the opinions of colleagues from abroad, and to communicate to readers in different languages through translations. Borders do not apply to literature – books, stories and literary characters are at home across the world. All of the inhabitants of this planet are united through reading, which is literature's greatest attraction, power and message. In recent years the book industry has undergone great changes related to the new technologies which have opened new perspectives for

traditional readers. There has been a proportional rise in the importance of reading for the development of critical literacy and the stabilization of civic society. These trends are also part of the current form of the Czech book market and the activities which connect it to international projects.

The Frankfurt Book Fair is the largest and most prestigious book fair in the world. For Czechia this represents a unique opportunity to present its literature and related new media – in fact its entire culture industry – to the host country and the rest of the world. Learning is a process that always has mutual benefits: in Frankfurt, Czech artists can find out about the world and the world can find out about them.

Not only is our country ready to participate at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2026, but more importantly it is ready to be its guest of honour. Contemporary Czech authors have much to offer the world of literature – a typical irony and self-irony, the art of narrating strong stories and searching for inspirational themes including the most fundamental – the environment, gender, as well as sustainable development and social responsibility. The Czech book industry would use the Frankfurt Book Fair to interact more intensively with the rest of the world, utilizing and expanding its contacts and gaining new experience and partners.

Over a long period the government of Czechia, represented by the Ministry of

Culture and other public institutions such as the Moravian Library in Brno and the Czech Literary Centre (CzechLit), have supported the translation, publication and promotion of Czech literature abroad. Thanks to many years of preparation and hard work, Czechia became the guest of honour at the Leipzig Book Fair in 2019. The success of the presentation of Czech books, complemented by a series of readings and other cultural events, clearly showed that there is international interest in Czech writers and that they have much to offer. At the same time, it demonstrated that in terms of translating Czech literature, German is key to providing it access to other world languages and cultures.

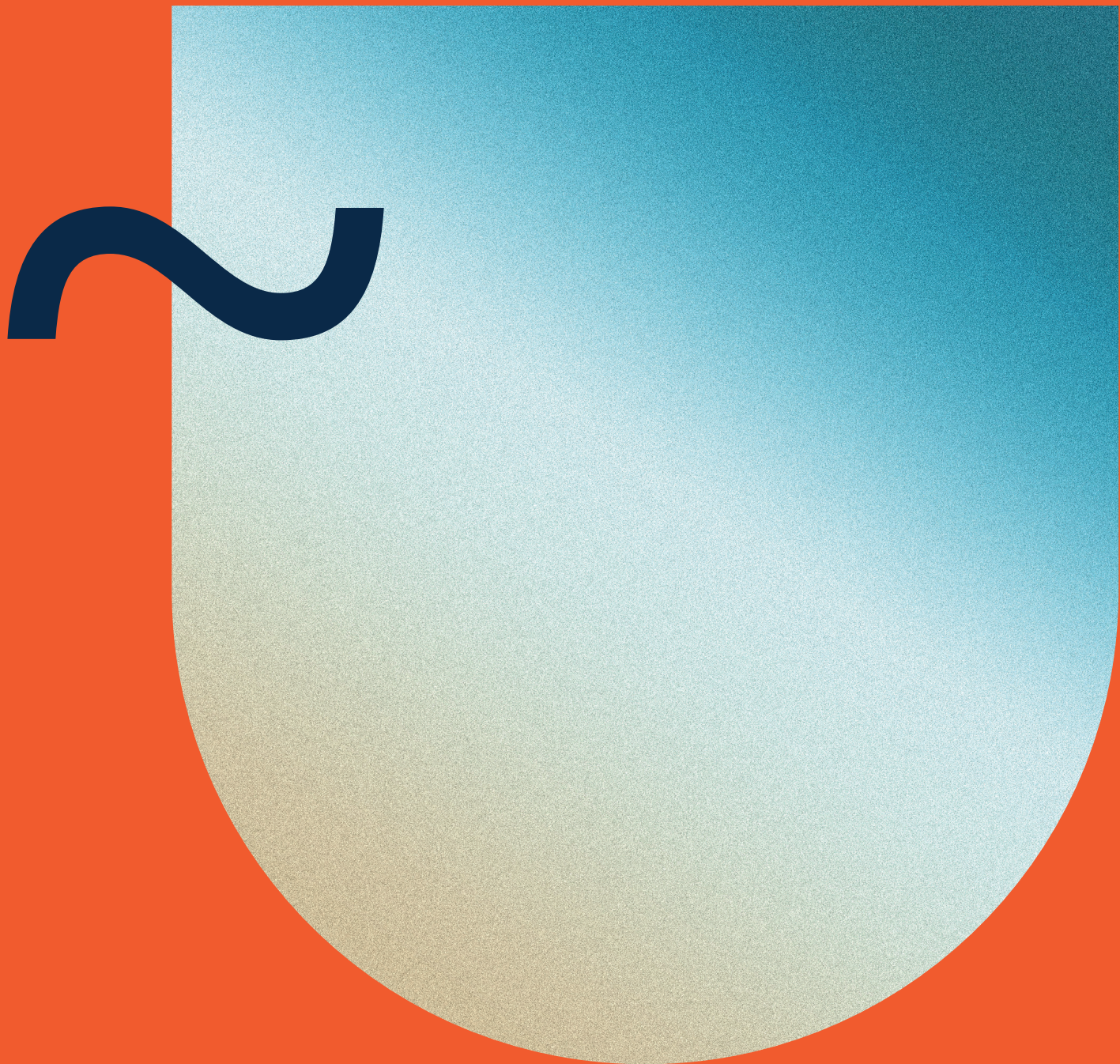
As a guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair, Czechia would not only follow on from this success but also expand upon it. We have the expertise to do this: We have the right people – writers and organizers – and we are ready to invest an incredible amount of energy, work and brainpower to achieve this goal.

We are looking forward to introducing the best of contemporary Czech literature and the entire culture industry to the world in Frankfurt in 2026, while establishing new connections, making new friends and taking part in an enriching cultural exchange.

With this publication, Czechia officially sets out the reasons for its candidacy as guest of honour at the 2026 Frankfurt Book Fair.



# Objectives



In general, our shared European and global objectives are to preserve cultural diversity, search for environmental solutions to save the planet (Green Deal), protect freedom, engage in a democratic dialogue to strengthen trust in democracy, to break down the borders between regions, and to promote social inclusion.

Additionally, we want to support the intellectual exchange and circulation of works with a special focus on strengthening the dialogue with Czech writers, to contribute towards the post-Covid revival of the sector, to highlight Czech literature on the German, European and world stage, and through the promotion of Czech literature to promote Czech culture as a whole.

## What else do we want to achieve?



Over the long term we want to support the publication of Czech literature abroad and its translation into German, English, Spanish and other less widespread languages. We also want to increase the number and diversity of international publishers involved in Czech literature.

Our aim is also to support the creative industry and new media, to contribute towards discovering innovative environmental solutions, to facilitate the establishment of new con-

tacts, cultural and economic cooperation and understanding between nations on a global scale, and to represent Czechia as a culturally, socially and economically developed democratic country, which is firmly grounded in the EU.

We wish to emphasize the role of translators as key actors in international cultural exchanges, and to expand the presentation of Czech literature – from traditional printed books to audiobooks, podcasts and new media.

Finally, we wish to encourage and support Bohemian Studies at European and international universities, and to strengthen cooperation with libraries and memory institutions in the EU and across the world.



# Czechia



A COUNTRY ON THE COAST



„ANTIGONUS.

Thou art perfect, then, our ship hath touch'd upon  
The deserts of Bohemia?“

SHAKESPEARE / THE WINTER'S TALE



# Theme & Key Metaphor



Despite the dry fact that throughout its history the Royal Czech Lands and Czechia has always been a landlocked country, in his play *The Winter's Tale*, William Shakespeare set it on the coast.

A geographical joke? Or perhaps an error of genius? The opposite is true – it is a timeless metaphor: Shakespeare's canonical text identified our country as an integral part of the world's ocean of literature.

And Czech literature has lived up to this vision through its own brand of humour, the breaking down of stereotypes, and the ability to see itself as others see it.

Although the largest body of water in the real Czechia is Lake Lipno, with an area of a mere 49 square kilometres, we feel we are floating on the same wave as the endless expanse of world culture, washed by the tide of an invisible sea of mutual inspiration.

This is why “Czechia – a country on the coast” is the theme and key metaphor for our participation at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2026.

We can discover Czechia as a country on the coast on various literary levels, as well as in artistic communication in general:



## The Coast of Imagination

In Czech culture all possible forms of imagination are combined: imaginary worlds, virtual universes, utopias and dystopias, unlimited playfulness, visual as well as verbal imagination, postmodern performance, the use of new media, breaking down stereotypes, creative experiments, innovation, concepts and vision.



## The Coast of Creativity

Art in a country on the coast is not cut off from reality – in human society it guarantees and carries out a number of useful functions. For example, it helps to develop creative thought and advanced literacy, it promotes intermediality as a way to break down barriers between different artistic genres, it symbiotically grows through various aspects of social awareness, and expands societal memory.



## The Coast of Humanity

Lighthouses and breakwaters are built on the coast because the ocean can be wild and human existence is the greatest value and measurement of all things. Which is why Czech literature plunges into issues that are both universal and individual, where social-critical and philosophical-essayistic waves influence each other: In Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, where does Gregor Samsa the human being end and where does the "gigantic insect" begin? Will Čapek's artificial human destroy humanity or help it evolve, just as Czech literature enriched all of the world's languages with the word robot? From the coastal mists emerges a procession of homunculi, robots, animated puppets, thinking monuments, and other human/non-human creations as a typical feature of Czech culture.



## The Borderline of the Coast

A coastline is unstable: it is shaped by the tide's patient rhythm, the high tide covers the land only to be revealed again by the low tide, the inland has to be protected from flooding. The uncertain border between land and sea is an appealing metaphor for Czech literature in exile, Czech-German literature, and for the unsettled geography of imaginary borders. It is worth remembering Milan Kundera's definition of Central Europe as an area which geographically lies in the middle of the continent but is politically in the East against its will, while culturally it belongs in the West.

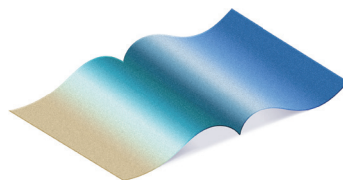


## Approaching the Coast

The coast is the best place for diverse cultures to meet and enrich one another. Not only are exotic fruits transported here, but so are new ideas and information. Here we have the transference of both goods and literature. Among our most successful exports abroad are Czech Studies and the presentation of Czech culture.

Czech stories are also reflected in the literature of other languages. To name but a few: Laurent Binet (HHhH), Jean Echenoz (Running), Michael Chabon (The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay), Angelo Maria Ripellino (Magical Prague), Philip Roth (The Prague Orgy), W. G. Sebald (Austerlitz), Tom Stoppard (Rock ,n' Roll), and Mariusz Szczygieł (Gotland).

Our ambition is to present Czechia at the 2026 Frankfurt Book Fair using the key metaphor “a country on the coast”. Therefore, our reply to Antigonus’s question from the start of this chapter is: “Yes, we are perfect.” This is because the decision to open up to the world allows us to know ourselves better. Like the person who listens to the sound of the sea in a shell and hears the echo of their own heartbeat.



# The Book Trade & Public Support of Literature

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We view the creation, distribution and reception of Czech literature in Czechia and abroad as the holistic interaction between all the links in a chain: authors – publishers – booksellers – librarians – readers. Its development as a mutually linked system has been comprehensively supported and regulated by the state in cooperation with local authorities

since the establishment of an independent Czechoslovakia at the end of the First World War. This system operates using the globally applied standards of democratic countries with advanced market economies, albeit also characterized by certain historical and local features.

## The Czech book trade in numbers



BOOKS PUBLISHED IN CZECHIA IN 2021

**86 %** PUBLISHED  
IN CZECH  
**3.5 %** PUBLISHED  
IN ENGLISH

**8.6 billion crowns** (0.34 billion EUR)\*

WAS THE OVERALL VOLUME FOR THE CZECH BOOK MARKET IN 2021



**8 108**

REGISTERED PUBLISHERS  
IN CZECHIA BY THE END OF 2022



\* For the purpose of the calculation in EUR, the conversion of 1 EUR = 25 CZK was used.

A major driving force behind the book trade in Czechia is the state. In 2021, the Ministry of Culture supported 47 literary events with grants amounting to 10 million crowns (0.4 million EUR)\*.

In the category of non-periodical publications (non-commercial original Czech books and translated fiction, literary-criticism and related sciences, illustrated books for children and young adults, original Czech comics, literary debuts and specialist critical editions), it helped 522 publications with grants amounting to over 29 million crowns (1.16 million EUR)\*.

In 2022, 228 translations of Czech literature were supported to the sum of 18.6 million crowns (0.74 million EUR)\*. In 2023, the amount of support has been provisionally set at 16 million crowns (0.64 million EUR)\*. At the moment the Ministry of Culture not only supports the translation of books but also of extracts from books and covers the costs for printing and promotion; all of this amounts to a maximum of 70% of the overall costs.

In 2021, the Ministry of Culture allocated 1.3 million crowns (0.05 million EUR)\* for creative scholarships in literature (scholarships for authors of original Czech literature as well as translators of foreign languages). The book market in Czechia has distinctive characteristics due to its political and cultural development, primarily during the transformation period to a market economy at the start of the 1990s. It is more colourful and diverse...but

it also suffers from fragmentation. The large global publishing conglomerates which normally control book markets have not established themselves in Czechia. Although there are two large publishing houses here (Albatros Media and Euromedia Group), their influence is not as overwhelming as in countries where global players are better at dominating the bestseller market. Alongside the two aforementioned publishers, the most important in Czechia are national publishers such as MOBA – Moravská Bastei, Václav Svojtka & Co., and Grada Publishing.

In terms of the number of books published per head of population **we are among the world leaders**, even in comparison with countries that publish books in world languages and thus not only supply the domestic market. This obviously results in lower costs for individual books leading to increased profitability.

Czechia has the **densest network of libraries in the world**. A total of 6,000 public libraries plus approximately 5,000 unregistered school libraries create a unique environment for the book market to operate in. On the one hand, libraries help maintain a strong community of readers and represent guaranteed sales for published books, on the other, the opportunity to borrow books for free keeps their prices low.

Within a European democratic, social, cultural and educational environment, libraries play a key role at all levels. Across Europe they contribute enormously to strengthening democracy by bringing citizens together and

getting the general public involved – including in rural and remote areas. They offer different groups a safe and accessible environment, they develop programmes and activities which reflect contemporary social needs, and they provide access to a plurality of reliable information and diverse cultural content. They are the main gateway to data, knowledge, research and to local culture and society. The results from the Conference on the Future of Europe and the obvious need to improve democratic dialogue with citizens shows that the library has an irreplaceable role as an accessible, open and safe platform for dialogue.

## Literary journals, criticism and awards

Literary journals are an important part of the infrastructure of the Czech literature industry. **Several dozen** of them are published in Czechia today, which is an incredible number when compared with music, theatre, art and film. Some of them have a long tradition (the monthly *Host*, the fortnightly *Tvar*), others started as *samizdats* during the Communist rule (*Revolver Revue*, *Prostor*), while others were founded after the Velvet Revolution in 1989 (the cultural fortnightly *A2*). The publication of literary journals in Czechia is supported by the Ministry of Culture's grant system.

The journals from the Czech literary scene provide oxygen for new authors; they give

space to genres on the intersection between art and journalism, such as essays and literary reportage; they feature interviews with Czech and international authors; and most importantly they reflect critically on contemporary literature.

**Literary criticism** is struggling for breath in today's mainstream media. Newspapers' culture sections are on the decline and their function is being taken over by literary journals and specialist websites (*iLiteratura*, *Klackoviště*).

**Literary awards** are a particular way of reflecting on literature. The most visible in the media in Czechia is the **Magnesia Litera**, which annually selects the Book of the Year in addition to winners from the categories of prose, poetry, books for children, publishing event, translation and so on. The winning books gain publicity in the mass media and on the internet, which can significantly boost their sales.



*Magnesia Litera 2023*

Each year the prestigious **State Prize for Literature** and the **State Prize for a Work of**



**Translation** are also awarded. Other important awards include the **Jaroslav Seifert Prize**, which was established by the Charter 77 Foundation in Stockholm in 1986 to support Czech and Slovak literature both at home and abroad. **The European Union Prize for Literature** is also crucial for the translation of contemporary Czech literature into foreign languages. **The Jiří Orten Award** is given for prose or poetry written in Czech by authors who are under thirty years of age at the time of publication, with a tradition dating back to 1987. Each year it is awarded by the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers with the support of the Czech Ministry of Culture, the State Cultural Fund, Prague City Council and Czech-Lit. And not least, the only international literary prize – the **Franz Kafka Prize**, which connects contemporary Czech and international writers – is awarded each year in Prague.


The creators of the best books in Czech for children and young adults are presented with the annual **Golden Ribbon Award**. This is announced by the Czech Section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY), which is co-organized by the Illustrators' Club of Children's Books, the Czech Literary Translators' Guild, the National Pedagogical Museum, the J.A. Comenius Library, and the Museum of Czech Literature. In addition to the literary aspect, awards are also given for illustration, translation, comics and publishing event.

Alongside prizes for original works of litera-

ture, there are also prizes aimed at supporting Czech literature and culture abroad. For example, the prestigious **Premia Bohemica** prize is awarded by the Moravian Library on behalf of the Ministry of Culture for outstanding contributions to the promotion of Czech literature abroad, while the **Artis Bohemiae Amicis** (Friends of Czech Art) is given in recognition of the long-term systematic promotion of Czech culture.

The third group is made up of academic institutions, in particular the Institute for Czech Literature of the Czech Academy of Sciences, which among other things regularly holds discussions on the current state of Czech literature and produces critical overview publications.

## Professional organizations



There are professional organizations which represent every area of activity in the Czech book market.

The Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers brings together the majority of the most important people operating in the Czech market. Among other things it organizes **Book World**, the largest book fair in Czechia, which features both local writers and readers as well as prominent guests from around the world.

Alternative and smaller operators in the book industry are represented by the **Publishers'**

**Guild** – the professional association of the publishers and ‘workers’ of literature. They also organize the **BookFest** cultural festival, which boasts readings, workshops, exhibitions and other events.

Writers can also freely choose whether to join the traditional **Writers’ Guild**, the Czech branch of PEN International, or the more recent **Writers’ Association**.

These organizations promote a professional concept of the work of writers and try to safeguard their status. They operate as partners of state organs and other institutions, and can offer writers advice concerning copyright, while creating and cultivating space for general discussions on the role of literature in society.

In 2015 and 2022 the Association of Writers **organized two Writers’ Conferences**. These were inspired by the tradition of conferences from the 1960s which focused on the relationship between literature and politics. More recently they have been open to the public where there are discussions on the relationship between literature and war, literature and feminism, and more generally on what literature can and should be in an era dominated by digital technology.

Translators play a crucial role in international cultural exchange. In Czechia their interests are represented by the **Translators’ Guild**, which mainly brings together translators of literature into Czech. It is a member of CEATL

(European Council of Literary Translators’ Associations) and presents the **Josef Jungmann Award** for translation each year.

It supports young translators through the anonymous competition for the **Jiří Levý Prize**, it organizes workshops and courses, offers legal advice, and also presents the Rack anti-prize to highlight malpractices in the translating and publishing industry.

It has long supported initiatives to increase the visibility of translators, for example, through the ongoing European ‘Translators on the Cover’ campaign.

## Projects to promote reading



Reading for all age groups is supported by a series of projects and campaigns, including **Growing with Books**, **Reading to Children**, and **Prague City of Literature**.

**Creative Europe** – a European Union programme to support culture and creative sectors – also operates in this field.

## Audiobooks, podcasts and new media



Alongside traditional printed books, the Czech culture industry is increasingly promot-

ing multi-genre projects: **audiobooks, podcasts and inter-disciplinary works created and distributed through new media.**

The market for audiobooks and the spoken word continues to grow. According to a report based on input from members of the Association of Audiobook Publishers, the turnover for the retail market of audiobooks in Czechia reached **260 million CZK (10.4 million EUR)\*** in 2021, which was a **year-on-year increase of more than 12%.**

Around 500 new titles are brought out in this sector in Czechia each year with fiction being the most popular genre, while the growing share of Czech and Slovak authors already outnumbers foreign writers. The best-selling titles usually mirror the best-selling book titles.

Seven private publishers enjoy a significant share of the market: OneHotBook, Tympanum, Audiotéka, Radioservis, Albatros Media, Supraphon, and Euromedia Group. A number of smaller players also coexist on the market, often focusing on non-commercial output for marginal target groups and genres.

The publication of audiobooks is extremely important **in terms of social responsibility towards citizens with disabilities, in particular the visually impaired and blind.** In Czechia the publication and distribution of audiobooks is **supported by the Ministry of Culture** and local authority organizations, in particular municipal and community libraries.

Volunteers who are part of associations and non-profit organizations are also very important in the creation of audiobooks for these disadvantaged listeners.

The Association of Audiobook Publishers also organizes the annual **Audiobook of the Year** award which evaluates new work in the categories of best single-voice reading, best multiple-voice reading, best audiobook for children and young adult, best performer, and so on.

A crucial role in audio-literature is played by the non-commercial public broadcaster **Czech Radio**. It uses money from licence-fee payers to create high-quality professional and artistic audio versions of original authors' works, as well as the dramatizations or readings of books by Czech and international writers. These are broadcast either by several different stations or as podcasts on their own website.

The main Czech Radio station focusing on culture and literature is **Radio Vltava**. Every day it broadcasts two series of readings, short stories, literary and music programmes, as well as poetry and drama.

The stations Dvojka and Plus then provide serialized readings – Plus focuses on factual literature and Dvojka on drama.

Czech Radio has a long track record of collaborating directly with writers and professional actors to record fiction and plays which have been written for radio.

Recently, Czech Radio has also noted a rapid rise in individual streamings on the internet as opposed to linear broadcasting, which brings its work closer to audiobooks. However, its reach is much wider than commercial audiobooks – Czech Radio’s most successful literary programmes can boast **up to 250,000 individual digital streamings**.

Thanks to the **mujRozhlas mobile app**, listeners can play live broadcasts and podcasts from the whole of Czech Radio on their smartphones.

## Literary festivals



The largest showcase of the culture industry in Czechia is the **Book World Prague** international book fair and festival, which is organized every year by the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers. Its traditional setting is the Industrial Palace in Prague’s Exhibition Grounds in Bubeneč. In addition to presenting books from large and small Czech publishers there are also readings and debates between leading international and Czech writers on free speech, globalization, literature’s future, and similar themes. A number of awards are also presented at Book World Prague including the **Jiří Theiner Award** for outstanding individuals who speak out against censorship and are important voices in the struggle for democracy. The prize is given to a person or institution who/which has contributed signif-

icantly to the promotion and dissemination of Czech literature abroad.

Alongside books for the general public and specialists, the festival also attempts to awaken and deepen a love of literature in younger readers, for whom there is a special programme at the ‘Growing with Books’ pavilion.

In 2022, **54,000 people visited Book World Prague**. There were a total of 416 exhibitors and 746 participants, while 465 programmes and 9 exhibitions were organized for visitors.

The **Authors’ Reading Month (MAČ)** is the largest Central European literary festival, which takes place **concurrently in Czechia, Slovakia and Poland, as well as in Ukraine** in previous years. The MAČ offers two main programmes: one covers the literature of the home country while the other looks at the literature of the country which is the guest of honour for that year. Each year MAČ begins on 1 July in the Moravian capital of Brno and then moves from one host city to the next for 31 days.

The **Prague Writers’ Festival** is a literary-cultural festival held in Prague. The festival presents a number of international and local writers as part of authors’ readings, which are accompanied by discussions and other programmes such as book launches, theatre performances and films.

The literary fair **Knihex** is a bi-annual meeting of publishers and readers in a pleasant, friend-

ly atmosphere – whether it is the Knihex held in the summer at Kasárna Karlín, or in winter when it moves inside for warmth. Knihex presents publications from small high-quality publishers which are introduced by the publishers themselves during lively conversations with their readers. The fair also includes a diverse programme featuring workshops, book launches, readings, performances, rest zones... and more.

The **Autumn Book Fair** has been held in the town of Havlíčkův Brod on the border between Bohemia and Moravia since 1991. It is the oldest, second largest, and according to many exhibitors and visitors, the most likeable Czech book fair.

Czech Centres, an official Czech cultural institute, plays a key role in cultural diplomacy, whose mission is to spread and promote Czechia's reputation in the world and strengthen cultural ties between countries. Its flagship is **Literature Night**. The project was started by Czech Centres in 2006 and has gradually attracted dozens of libraries and thousands of visitors in Czechia as well as countries abroad, where the Literature Night is organized in collaboration with **EU-NIC – the EU National Institutes for Culture**. Literature Night presents new European literature translated into Czech through a series of public readings. In Prague this exceptionally popular event is held in various attractive locations featuring well-known Czech actors.

With the help of the internationally recognized **Night with Andersen** event, Czech libraries have been trying to develop a love of reading in children in the face of competition from more popular media. It was founded in 2000 by two librarians from the Moravian town of Uherské Hradiště. Several hundred libraries from Czechia, Slovakia, Poland and other countries now take part. Children read, play various games and have adventures in the libraries themselves, where they also spend the night.



*Svět knihy Praha (Book World Prague) 2023*

# Czech Literature in Translation

## **Presenting Czech literature abroad**



Each year the Ministry of Culture presents Czechia's national stall at various international book fairs: in the spring in Bologna, London and Leipzig; and in Frankfurt/Main in the autumn. The Ministry covers the costs for renting the space while the Moravian Library is then responsible for organizing the stalls and the accompanying programme. The book-fair presentation focuses on the latest titles from Czech publishers – for example, Academia, Albatros, Baobab, Host, Meander and Karoli-

num, but it also looks at the book industry in general, including prizes and prize winners, bestsellers, the most beautiful books, books in translation, etc. An important aspect is the participation of the authors, who present their latest works in translation either through discussions or readings.

The Ministry of Culture also promotes Czech literature at other fairs, festivals and literary events across the world, usually in cooperation with the network of Czech Centres and the Czech Literary Centre; in recent years such presentations have taken place in France, Poland, Austria, Romania, Spain, Ukraine, as well as in China and Colombia.





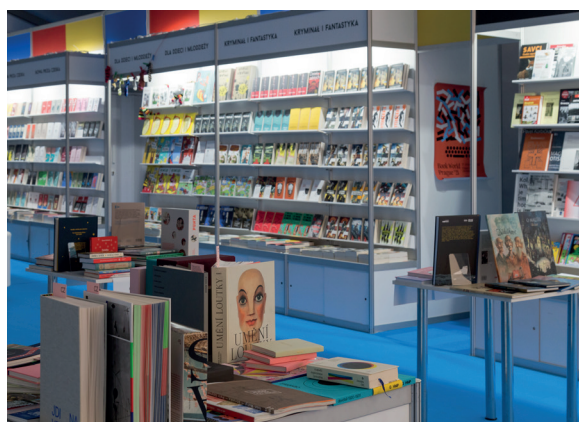
*Galovičeva jesen book fair in Koprivnica, Croatia, 2018*



*Czech literature on festival Margó in Budapest, Hungary, 2018*



*Bologna Children's Book Fair, 2023*



*Czechia as the main guest at the International book fair in Warsaw, 2021*



*Festival of Czech literature in Italy, 2022*



*Czech poetry at Silesius international festival in Poland*



## Leipziger Buchmesse 2019



Czechia was the main guest at the **Leipziger Buchmesse international book fair** from 21 to 24 March 2019. It was one of the greatest post-1989 successes in terms of the export of Czech literature abroad, especially of more recent works published after the year 2000. Fifty authors appeared at the fair, and publishers presented more than eighty new books translated into German; for example, by the German, Austrian and Swiss publishing houses Hoffmann und Campe, Suhrkamp, Karl Rauch, Luchterhand, Voland & Quist, Residenz, Kein & Aber, Balaena, KLAK, Osburg, Gerhard Hess, Braumüller, Edition Korrespondenzen, edition clandestin, hochroth, Kētos, Wieser, Drava, Das Wunderhorn, Herder, Neofelis and Wehrhahn. There were **one hundred and twenty literary events** – all during the four days in Leipzig, as well as part of the cultural programme ‘The Czech Year’ in Germany, Austria and in the German-speaking cantons of Switzerland.

The German-language media gave the event much attention – more than 2,700 reports appeared in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and most were very enthusiastic: “**No country until now has managed to present its own literature as clearly as Czechia,**” wrote the Leipziger Zeitung on the day after the event finished.

Interest at the Leipzig Fair was mainly in the new translations of Czech works into Ger-

man, with the thirtieth anniversary of the end of Czechoslovak totalitarianism acting as a connecting theme. Alongside literature for adults, there was also a great deal of attention focused on authors of prose, poetry, and books for children and young adults.

Unfortunately, the surge of interest in Czech literature in German-speaking areas, which the Czech presentation at Leipzig Book Fair in 2019 had helped inspire, was swiftly curtailed by the Covid pandemic from 2020-2022, followed by the Russian aggression in Ukraine since February 2022. In spite of this, in September 2021 Czechia was **the main guest at the international book fair in Warsaw**, which unusually took place in the public space in front of the Palace of Culture and Science and attracted tens of thousands of readers.



# LEIPZIG 2019 TSCHICHEN

## Programmes to support the translation of Czech literature



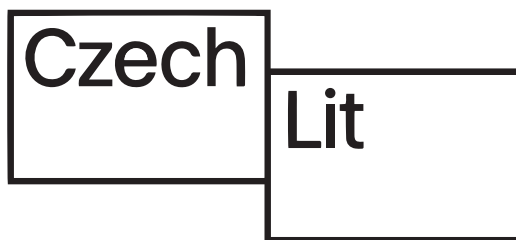
The Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic has organized a series of programmes over a long period to support the publication of translated literature – both into and from Czech.

The grant programme to **support the publication of Czech literature in translation** is aimed at foreign publishing houses. The programme has been in operation since 1998 and underwent significant changes in 2017/2018: since then, foreign publishers can access support for the translation of books, but also for book excerpts up to 25 pages in length, for special magazine editions, as well as for the cost of copyright, printing and advertising – up to 70% of the total cost for all of these. **228 translations were supported** in this way in 2022. The support is aimed primarily at new and recent Czech literature – i.e. titles which were published after 1989 and 2000. Literary agents play an important role here (Dana Blatná, Edgar de Bruin, Maria Sileny), who together represent more than forty contemporary Czech writers. In German-speaking areas, Czech literature receives systematic attention from publishers such as **Karl Rauch, Hoffmann und Campe, Luchterhand, Balaena, Drava, Hochroth, Kētos, and Wieser**. Czech publishers which bring out Czech literature in German include **Větrné mlýny** in Brno and **Karolinum** in Prague.

## CzechLit and its activities



The **Czech Literary Centre** (CzechLit) was established in January 2017 by the Moravian Library in Brno under the Czech Ministry of Culture. Its aim is to **systematically promote Czech literature and book culture**. It tries to achieve this by connecting different activities with institutions of literary culture, raising the profile of Czech literature and book culture both at home and abroad, and by helping to develop and fulfil its role as a conduit of shared values and themes in a national and international context.



CzechLit has a bilingual website – [www.CzechLit.cz](http://www.CzechLit.cz)

The basis for all of CzechLit's activities is a **functioning network of international partners**, which the organization has been gradually building and expanding since its establishment.

In cooperation with the Goethe Institute in Prague and the Wrocław Literature House, CzechLit organizes a **spring and autumn creative residency for writers at Broumov Monastery**. Here, Czech authors can meet





*Authors' reading in Czech Centre Madrid, 2021*

and be inspired by writers from Poland and Germany.

CzechLit also organizes events aimed at the promotion of books published abroad that involve the direct participation of Czech authors.

Each year, CzechLit sends writers to residencies abroad and at the same time organizes roughly one hundred events focusing on the promotion of books published abroad and featuring Czech writers.

Since 2022, CzechLit has been in charge of **organizing the European Union Prize for Literature on behalf of the Czech Republic**, the aim of which is to raise the profile of authors from the individual European states and support the translation of minority languages.

## Support for translators from Czech and Czech Studies scholars

CzechLit organizes residencies for translators and Czech Studies scholars in Prague and Brno, it holds various seminars and debates at foreign and Czech universities, and it supports international conferences, translators' workshops and discussions on translating, including the professional forum at Book World Prague.



*Workshop for translators at Book World Prague 2021*

Since 2015, CzechLit, together with Czech Centres, has also organized the international **Susanna Roth Award** – a long-term project to support the younger generation of foreign Czech Studies scholars and translators.

There are dozens of excellent literary translators from Czech to German working in Czechia, who can also be relied on for large projects. Several of them have also received awards in Germany for their work – for example, Lena Dorn and Eva Profousová.

## Cooperation with foreign publishing houses

CzechLit provides an information service for foreign publishers: it publishes booklets on grant support from the Czech Ministry of Culture, the New Czech Books booklet and other genre-focused booklets presenting contemporary Czech work, as well as a newsletter which is distributed bi-annually to foreign publishers and partners.

It also organizes trips for foreign publishers to Czech book-industry festivals and fairs, such as Book World Prague, Knihex, Tabook, Frame and others.

Foreign publishers are also connected with translators and the literary agents of Czech writers.

## International cooperation


CzechLit is always on the lookout for new international partners for the Czech literature industry – organizers of festivals, cultural institutions and literature houses.

It is actively linked to a number of international networks: the European Network for Literary Translation (ENLIT) – a network bringing together more than 20 literary centres and institutions with its headquarters in Frankfurt; the lead coordinator Martin Krafl has been a

member of the ENLIT board since October 2022; based at the Academy of Art in Berlin, the Alliance of Academies (EAoA) is a network of cultural institutions which campaigns for artistic freedom while searching for new forms of international cooperation and mutual solidarity; CzechLit has been actively involved in the organization of specialist debates for members of the alliance in Europe; the European Network of Translation Residencies (RE-CIT) – a professional networking site linking 17 European institutions, providing residencies for translators (<https://www.re-cit.org/>).

CzechLit was also a partner of the international CELA project, which offered help to a new generation of writers to enter the literary scene at a national and international level from 2019-2023. The project, which was co-financed by the EU Creative Europe programme, linked eleven organizations from ten European countries (<https://www.cela-europe.com/>). From 2024 to 2026, CzechLit will join the next phase of the project on the basis of a European platform with a new generation of young Czech translators and writers.

## The most translated Czech authors



Contemporary Czech literature features a number of authors whose books and themes touch upon different cultures and therefore appeal to publishers and readers from across

the world. The majority of the authors listed have also won awards at home and abroad and regularly travel internationally to promote the publication of their books with the support of Czech Centres and CzechLit. We present an overview of them here, taking into account the publication of books into different languages and awards won by books translated into German.

### Michal Ajvaz

The books by this writer from the older generation have been translated into a total of 23 languages, including English and French.

### Bianca Bellová

Her books have come out in 23 foreign languages, including English, French and German.

### Tereza Boučková

Her novel *The Year of the Rooster* has so far been translated into 10 languages, including Italian, Spanish and German.

### Ivona Březinová

The books by this children's fiction writer have so far been translated into 19 languages, including French. Her book *The Enchanted Classroom* was selected for the IBBY Honour List.

## Radka Denemarková

Her books have been translated into more than 23 languages. Her novel *Money from Hitler* has been published in 20 countries, including Germany, and was awarded the Spycher Literaturpreis Leuk 2019. The novel *Hours of Lead* won the Literaturpreis des Landes Steiermark in 2022 and the Brücke Berlin Literatur- und Übersetzungspreis 2022 for both the author and the translator Eva Profousová.

## Irena Dousková

Her works have been published in translation into a total of 15 languages, three of her books have been published in German and two in English.

## Lucie Faulerová

Her novel *Deathmaiden* has so far been translated into 12 languages, including Italian, Spanish and German.

## Jiří Hájíček

His books have been translated into 11 languages, including German.

## Pavla Horáková

Her book *The Theory of Strangeness* has so far been translated into 11 languages, including Spanish and Italian.

## Petra Hůlová

Her various titles have been published in 18 languages, including English and German. Her book *A Brief History of the Movement* has been published in six languages.

## Jiří Kratochvíl

The books by another author of the older generation have been translated into 18 languages, including English, German, French, Spanish and Italian.

## Alena Mornštajnová

So far her most translated book is the novel *Hana*, which has been published in 16 foreign languages (including English, German and French) and is set to come out in a further eight languages.

## Jan Němec

The author's most translated work is *A History of Light*. Overall, Jan Němec's books have been translated into 13 languages, including German and Italian, with an English translation in the pipeline.

## Patrik Ouředník

The books by the author and translator who writes in Czech and French and who lives in France have been translated into a record



40 languages, including French, German and Italian.

## Josef Pánek

The book *Love in the Time of Global Climatic Change* has been published in 12 languages, including German and French.

## Jaroslav Rudiš

The most well-known works by this novelist, scriptwriter and musician have been translated into more than 10 languages – for example, *The Sky under Berlin* and the comics *Alois Nebel*. He has been writing his books in German since 2019.

## Petra Soukupová

Her books have been published in 14 languages, including Italian, and preparations are underway for publications in French and German.

## Petr Stančík

So far his books have been translated into nine languages, three of which have come out in German and two in Spanish.

## Jáchym Topol

His books have been translated into 27 languages, including English, French and German.

## Kateřina Tučková

So far the author's most successful book abroad has been *The Last Goddess*, which has been translated into 20 languages, including German, English, Italian and French. The Italian translation won the Premio Salerno Libro d'Europa 2018.

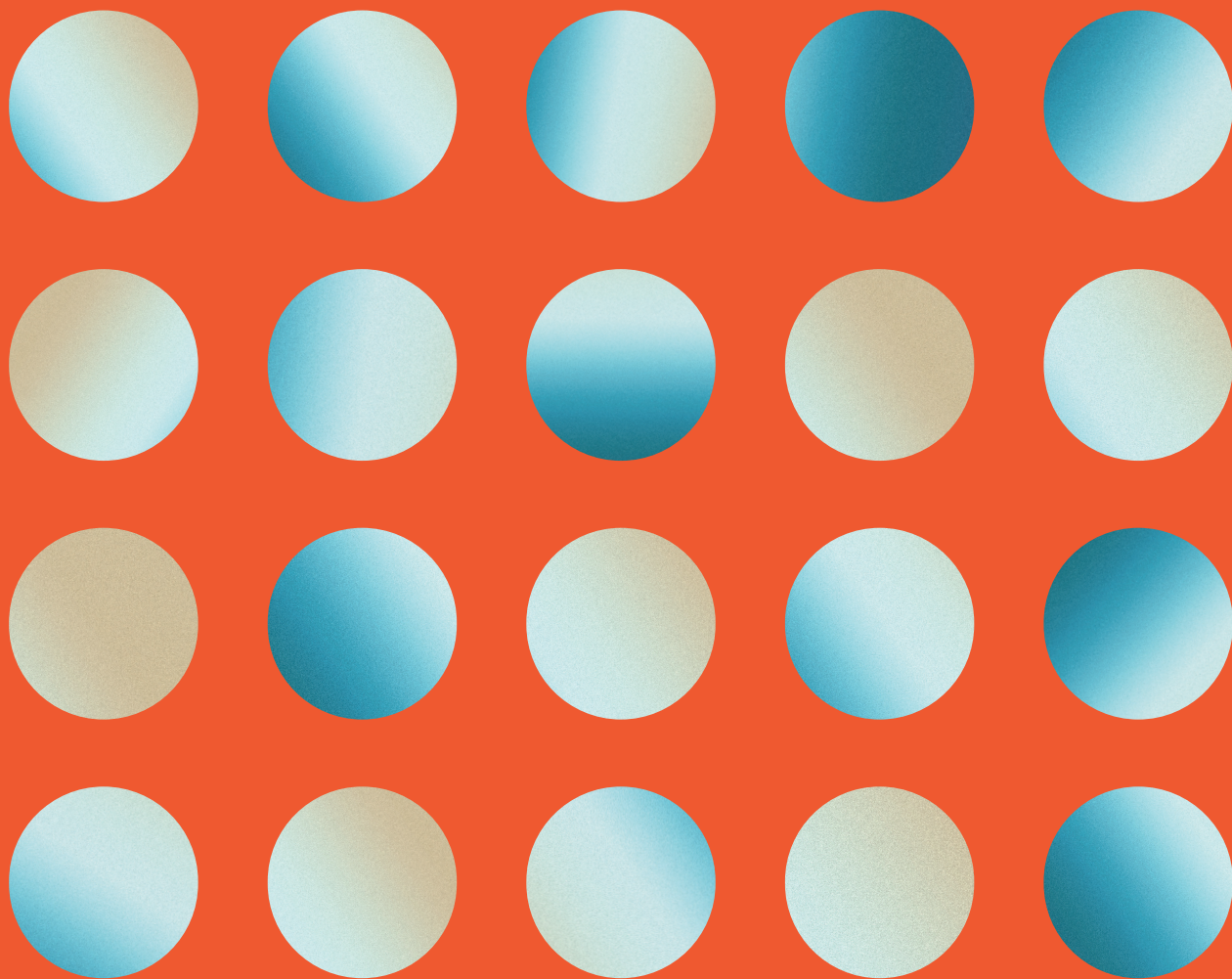
## Miloš Urban

His various works have been published in a total of 18 languages, including English, German and Spanish.





# Writers & Their Literature



## Traditional Czech literature



Translations of Czech literature into German have for many years maintained a roughly **50% share for contemporary Czech literature and 50% for traditional Czech literature**. There is still an interest in the Czech classics primarily amongst the German, English and Spanish languages.

Traditional literature in translation is represented mainly by **writers from the 19th century** – the key works from the Czech National Revival and Romanticism continue to be republished (Božena Němcová in prose, Karel Hynek Mácha and Karel Jaromír Erben in poetry), there are also Jan Neruda's Prague short stories and sketches, the fantasy prose of Julius Zeyer and Jakub Arbes, and the Czech and German prose from the Czech-German borderland around the Šumava mountains by Karel Klostermann.

Writers from the era of Modernism in the first decades of the 20th century also represent an important group, such as the writers and journalists Karel Čapek, Jaroslav Hašek, Milena Jesenská, Ladislav Klíma, Karel Poláček, and the poets Otokar Březina and Vítězslav Nezval. Works by authors dealing with the Holocaust also continue to be published (Jiří Weil).

Books are still being published by authors who came to prominence during the **liberalization of political and cultural life under the Communist regime in the 1960s**, and who over the subsequent two decades were either

banned outright (Jiří Gruša, Václav Havel) or were published subject to the approval of the regime (Bohumil Hrabal). The older works by the generation of writers who made the biggest mark on German-language literary life – Ivan Klíma, Pavel Kohout, Milan Kundera – also continue to be published.

The contribution made by multilingual and multinational culture, which was typical of interwar Czechoslovakia, can be seen in a significant part of Czech literature consisting of authors from the Prague German literary circle – Franz Kafka, Rainer Maria Rilke, Gustav Meyrink, Max Brod, Franz Werfel, Egon Erwin Kisch and others. Neither can we forget in this simple list those authors whose debut works, or greatest novels, were published in exile in the language of their new country (Jan Novák, Petr Sís, Ludvík Aškenazy, Jiří Gruša, and again Milan Kundera and others), and who returned to Czech literature after the Velvet Revolution in 1989, when their experience of looking at Czech language and culture from outside broadened literature's horizons.

## Contemporary Czech literature – authors, genres and themes



At the moment the greatest interest at home and for translations into world languages is in **women's literature**, in particular Alena Mornštajnová and Kateřina Tučková.

Other writers have already made a name for themselves abroad and continue to be followed by the critics – especially Radka Denemarková, Patrik Ouředník, Jaroslav Rudiš and Jáchym Topol. Others are gradually becoming better known: for example, the **recipients of the EU Prize for Literature** Bianca Bellová, Lucie Faulerová, Jan Němec and Tomáš Zmeškal; we should also mention Jiří Hájíček, Emil Hakl, Petra Hůlová, Stanislav Komárek, Vratislav Maňák, Jiří Padevět, Josef Pánek, Iva Pekárková, Markéta Pilátová, Iva Procházková, Martin Ryšavý, Petr Stančík, Marek Šindelka, Marek Toman, Miloš Urban and many others. The majority of them first enjoyed success in the local Czech market before appearing in the international market. Some of them, however, have been able to establish themselves internationally with their debut – recently, for example, Anna Cima won the 2019 Magnesia Litera for Discovery of the Year with her book *Wake Up in Shibuya*.

It is possible to observe several basic trends in contemporary Czech prose. Previously, most stories would at least to some extent return to the Communist past, either to the Stalinist era of the 1950s or the Normalization period of the 1970s and 1980s. In recent years, however, the thoughts and behaviour of characters relate **to the present rather than to the past**.

Over the past twenty years **the horizons of Czech authors have also greatly expanded** – from stories limited to the borders of Czechia to places and characters from across Europe,

Asia, Africa as well as North and South America (Petra Hůlová, Markéta Pilátová and others).

Not only has the geographical outlook of authors expanded, but the spectrum of themes has also widened. Czech literature often examines the dilemma between a strictly modern urban life and a return to the past of rural order and traditions. It also focuses on the issue of how to come to terms with **global and social crises**.

This range is now becoming even more fascinating and developed thanks to the addition of **gender, multicultural and environmental themes**.

A specific aspect of Czech literature consists of novels which look at **Czech-German cohabitation, the end of Nazism, and the postwar expulsion of the German population** (Radka Denemarková: *Money from Hitler*, Jakuba Katalpa: *The Germans*, Kateřina Tučková: *The Expulsion of Gerta Schnirch*).

The cultural proximity and interconnectedness with Germany is apparent in the number of Czech novelists who write in German: Eugen Brikcius, Ondřej Cikán, Jan Faktor, Jaroslav Rudiš and Michael Stavarič.

## Literature for children and young adults



In the 1960s, Czech books for children and

young adults were among **the most translated across the world and were well known for their artistic invention and contemporary themes**. This interest started to wane during the period of Normalization following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, as well as in the 1990s. Internationally, only the adventures of Zdeněk Miler's little mole were published with any regularity, along with Květa Pacovská's book projects and the works of Iva Procházková, together with the ever-growing creative potential of Petr Sís, who has lived in the USA since the 1980s.

However, in recent years interest in Czech literature for children and young adults has **started to grow again** – both at home and abroad.

Since the start of the new millennium, a large number of small alternative publishing companies have sprung up alongside the large Czech publishing houses (Baobab, Běžíliška, Meander, Petrkov, Pop-Pap, Verzone), which publish original, aesthetically appealing publications with an emphasis on high-quality illustrations and graphic and typographical design.

In terms of themes, Czechia follows the current European trends – contemporary visual art has had an influence on almost all genres: there has been an increase in the popularity of picture books, comics and graphic novels, fantasy, and factual literature including art-education literature. One specific genre whose popularity has grown significantly is

**the art guide**. Contemporary authors, illustrators and art historians have all demonstrated a willingness to engage with them – some examples are the successful, award-winning publications *Why Paintings Don't Need Titles* (Jiří Franta, Ondřej Horák) and *How to Make a Gallery* (Ondřej Chrobák, Rostislav Koryčánek, Martin Vaněk).

To help orientate booksellers, libraries, schools, as well as parents and the general public, the **Best Books for Children** catalogue is published each year by the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers together with the Czech Section of the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY).

The most prominent contemporary authors of Czech literature for children are Ivan Binar, David Böhm, Petr Borkovec, Ivona Březinová, Olga Černá, Petra Dvořáková, Daniela Fischerová, Robin Král, Miloš Kratochvíl, Daniela Krolupperová, Radek Malý, Vratislav Maňák, Marka Míková, Ivana Peroutková, Markéta Pilátová, Petra Soukupová, Petr Stančík, Ester Stará, Olga Stehlíková, Jana Šrámková, František Tichý, Marek Toman and Martin Vopěnka.

At present the most widely translated Czech book for children (into German, Spanish, Polish and other languages) is the trilogy of children's stories called *The Oddsockeaters*, *The Return of the Oddsockeaters* and *Oddsockeaters Forever*, by the creative duo of the poet and children's writer Pavel Šrut and the artist Galina Miklínová. The stories of mys-

terious creatures feeding off odd socks are captivating thanks to their essentially human humour which takes us away from the daily routine of our lives.

## Poetry



There is a distinctive structure to contemporary Czech poetry – particularly in terms of generation, but also from the perspective of the ‘poetic currents’ which skilfully reflect on contemporary social themes while at the same time utilize poetic traditions from both home and abroad.

Poetry receives little media attention, which mainly focuses on prose and this is why Czech poetry today exists mainly within the framework of literature in the form of readings, community events and communication.

A number of contemporary poets focus on multimedia forms by performing at festivals as part of music groups, where poetry and music are linked.

In Czechia, poetry collections are usually published in **small print runs of around 300 copies**, mostly by specialized publishers scattered across the republic (Aula, Dauphin, dybbuk, fra, Host, Malvern, Perplex, Protimluv, Triáda and others).

The audience for poetry is becoming **significantly younger** – partly thanks to the poetry

format which is seen as more concise and flexible than prose, which is more time consuming to read or listen to.

Poets do not associate in groups, instead they create a cohesive community with their audiences at festivals, readings, in literary cafes, at evening events organized by publishing companies and literary journals, or on online platforms.

Each year there are several prizes for works of poetry, the most prestigious being the **Magnesia Litera for Poetry**. There are also three international awards which focus partly on Czech poetry: the **Václav Burian Award** (poetry from Czechia, Poland, Slovakia, Germany, and most recently Belarus), **Básne CZ/SK** (poems in Czech and Slovak) and the **Dresden Poetry Prize** (DLP) – which is responsible for translations and poems printed in journals in Czech and German.

Amongst those contemporary Czech poets who are most frequently translated into German and English are Petr Borkovec, Milan Děžinský, Sylva Fischerová, Petr Hruška, J. H. Krchovský, Pavel Novotný, Tereza Riedlbauchová, Kateřina Rudčénková and Ivan Wernisch.

## Comics



Over the past twenty years Czech comics have enjoyed an upturn in fortunes and there have been radical changes in how they are

perceived. An artistic medium which was once thought of as literary trash or for children has now **established its own distinctive place within Czech culture**. The fundamental change which took place at the turn of the millennium – the repositioning of comics to an adult readership – is still apparent within the form of contemporary Czech comics, though there is also a gradual return to comics designed for children and young adults.

Over recent years, the Czech comics scene has become distinctively younger and more gender balanced. Today it is possible to study comics at the Faculty of Art and Design at the University of West Bohemia in Plzeň, while comics creation is part of the wider curriculum at a majority of art schools.

Until 1989, Czech comics had developed in relative isolation from world trends and most of today's authors began in the world of sub-cultures, which is why there is **no distinctive mainstream in Czech comics**. As a result it is very diverse and uses a whole range of artistic methods and styles.

Recently, Czech comics have been dominated by independently published books, comic books or graphic novels. Serialized or magazine comics remain the domain of comics aimed at children, where some traditional titles still survive (ABC, Čtyřlístek, Raketa).


Each year the **Muriel prize** (established 2007) presents awards for the best Czech comics in a series of categories.

Over recent years, the development and promotion of Czech comics abroad has been helped by increasing support from the government and public institutions: for example, the Czech Ministry of Culture's grant programme and support from the Czech Centres and CzechLit.

Amongst the most prominent contemporary Czech comic-book creators are Pavel Čech, Kateřina Čupová, Jiří Grus, Jaromír 99, Štěpánka Jislová, Lucie Lomová, Vojtěch Mašek, Nikkarin, Karel Osoha, Marek Rubec, Václav Šlajch and Toy\_Box.

The three most successful groups in contemporary Czech comics abroad have been translated into two world languages: Jaroslav Rudiš, Jaromír 99 – *Alois Nebel*; Jan Novák, Jaromír 99 – *Zátopek, So Far So Good*; Vojtěch Šeda, David Bartoň, Adam Drda – *We're Still at War*.

## Illustration, graphic design, typography



An integral part of every book is its artistic element, which has an aesthetic effect on the reader in the synergy with the text. While illustration has an indispensable role in literature for children and young adults, we can see graphic design and typography everywhere, even in the physical media of audiobooks and e-books.



The next generation of artists in Czechia is being trained at a **number of first-class colleges and secondary schools**, in particular Prague's Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design (UMPRUM), the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (AVU), the Ladislav Sutnar Faculty of Art and Design at the University of West Bohemia in Plzeň, followed by the College of Graphics and Secondary Technical School of Graphics in Prague, the Hollarka College and Secondary School of Art, and many others.

Some of the most outstanding figures in contemporary Czech book graphic design include Martin Pecina, Pavel Rút, Jana Vahalíková and Kateřina Wewiorová.

Each year the Czech Ministry of Culture and the Museum of Czech Literature hold the **Most Beautiful Czech Books of the Year**, competition, which evaluates books published in Czechia in terms of their graphic design, illustrations and printing. The winning publications are presented at the national stall at international fairs.

The standout figures in Czech book illustration are three recipients of the most prestigious international award for authors in the field of children's literature – the **Hans Christian Andersen Award**: Jiří Trnka (1968), Květa Pacovská (1992) and Petr Sís (2012).

Alongside these now legendary figures, artists from the middle and younger generations are starting to make an impact on the local and international market, the most success-

ful being: Patrik Antczak, Veronika Bílková, David Böhm, Darja Čančíková, Pavel Čech, Jindra Čapek, Lucie Dvořáková, Juraj Horváth, Jiří Franta, Renáta Fučíková, Václav Kabát, Michaela Kukovičová, Nikola Logosová, Galina Miklínová, Petr Nikl, Jaromír Plachý, Filip Pošivač, Lucie Raškovová, Magdalena Rutová, František Skála, Alžběta Skálová, Milan Starý, Anastasia Stročkova, Eva Sýkorová-Pekárková, Andrea Tachezy, Lukáš Urbánek, Eva Volfová and others.

The biggest showcase of contemporary illustration work in Czechia is the **LUSTR FESTIVAL**, which has been held annually since 2014. Czech, Slovak and other international artists present their work here in the form of individual installations, which take the illustrations to new dimensions.

Words are the basic building blocks of literature. Without letters it would be impossible to print any books. **Czech typographers create new, original fonts and typefaces and are among the best in their field.** For example, some of the most respected typographers today include Tomáš Brousil, Vojtěch Říha, Jan Solpera, František Štorm and Rostislav Vaněk.

Publishing companies such as Aulos in Prague bring out collectors' editions with original graphic design.

*Books nominated for the Most Beautiful  
Czech Books of the Year 2022*







# Czech Cultural Activities Abroad & in the Global Book Market



## German-speaking areas



When it was established, CzechLit chose German-speaking countries as its **priority area of interest**. Traditionally, there has been **more interest here in Czech literature than in other western areas**. Moreover, translations into German can be a steppingstone for other languages. The long-term activities of the Czech Centres in Berlin, Munich and Vienna have helped in this respect, whether through literary events which present new works by Czech writers translated into German and feature the authors and translators, or through presentations at festivals in the areas where they operate. CzechLit systematically works and consults with these centres.

CzechLit regularly cooperates with the larger and smaller international and regional specialized festivals, and has established an **extensive partnership network across the whole of Germany**. Some of its long-term partners include **Internationales Literaturfestival Berlin, Europäische Kinder und Jugendbuchmesse Saarbrücken, Europäisches Festival des Debütsromans Kiel, globale° – Festival für grenzüberschreitende Literatur in Bremen** and the **Comicfestival München**.

There has also been continued **cooperation with German literary houses** such as Literaturhaus Oberpfalz/Literaturarchiv Sulzbach-Rosenberg and Literaturzentrum Vorpommern/Koeppenhaus. Prospective

partners for the promotion of Czech literature to a wider public for both CzechLit and the Czech Centres are the German libraries in Dresden, Regensburg, Berlin and other cities, such as the Internationale Jugendbibliothek München/ Schloss Blutenberg.

Another important area of the CzechLit's activities is working with younger Czech Studies scholars. It regularly arranges for authors to visit Czech departments at various universities, such as in Regensburg, Munich, Leipzig, Göttingen, Greifswald and Erfurt.

Equally important is the **cooperation with translators in German-speaking countries** and the offer of educational opportunities at a high professional level. CzechLit regularly organizes lectures and seminars for translators, and every two years there are workshops for Czech and German translators in conjunction with prestigious partners such as the German Translation Fund (DÜF), the Translation House Looren in Switzerland, and the Goethe Institute in Prague.

For five years, CzechLit has been endeavouring to comprehensively expand its **network of literary residencies for Czech writers** so that they have the opportunity to focus on their work and at the same time gain valuable experience abroad, including making contacts with colleagues from other countries. It has managed to establish regular exchanges between the German and Czech literary scenes in cooperation with the Literarisches Colloquium Berlin, Adalbert Stifter Verein

München, the Worpswede artists' colony, TAKT Berlin – Leipzig – Zeitz, and Unabhängiges Literaturhaus Niederösterreich.

Since 2021, CzechLit has also actively participated in the organization of the **Dresden Poetry Prize** and the **EU Prize for Literature**.

## English-speaking areas



The London Czech Centre has long supported the presentation of Czech literature in English translation across the whole of Great Britain. It regularly runs the **Discovering Czech Literature series**, works with the British Library, and participates at the European Poetry Festival.

Great Britain has been the **main English-speaking area** that the Czech Literary Centre has focused on since its foundation. Its goal has been to promote Czech literature in London as well as other important parts of Great Britain, in particular the Manchester area and Scotland. In conjunction with the Czech Centres and the Czech general consulates in these areas, the biggest successes have been in comics, poetry and prose.

For five years, CzechLit has been working closely with the **Lakes International Comic Art Festival**, thanks to which Czech artists have been able to link up with the British comics scene. In 2021, **Czechia was even the guest of honour at this festival**.

## German-speaking countries at the **Book World festival**

The long-term conceptualized presentation of German literature at the **Book World Prague International Book Fair and Literary Festival** has been organized through the **Das Buch project**. This presentation is organized by institutions representing German-language culture in the Czech Republic, i.e., the Goethe Institute, the Austrian Cultural Forum, and the Swiss Embassy in the Czech Republic. In 2022, they participated at German Stories with its collective stands of publishers from Germany and other countries, which was organized by the Frankfurt Book Fair.

In 2024, **German-speaking countries will be the guest of honour at Book World Prague**. The symbolic framework is the **100th anniversary of the death of Franz Kafka**, who to this day remains an important link between the two literatures. The mutually beneficial contacts and connections between the Czech and German-language publishing industry will be strengthened by this event, which will have a positive influence on the presentation of Czech literature at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2026.



In the field of poetry, CzechLit initiated and financed a Czech edition of the prestigious British journal *Modern Poetry in Translation* in 2020. CzechLit has also collaborated with poetry festivals in St Andrews and Kendal.

In addition, CzechLit supported the publication of an **anthology of short stories about Prague** by Czech writers, which is being brought out in English by Comma Press in Manchester.

In the near future, CzechLit hopes to make new contacts and partnerships in **the USA and Canada**, and to increase the number of books published by Czech authors and ensure their participation at key literary and comics festivals and fairs. CzechLit will continue to support themed anthologies and single-themed national editions of foreign literary journals, which has been shown to be an effective way of promoting a larger number of writers.

## French-speaking areas



It has been difficult to establish Czech literature in France. In general, translated literature only makes up about 1/6 of the French book market, 60% of which consists of translations from English. **Each year around 10 books by Czech writers are published in French translation.**

However, since the establishment of CzechLit, the number of translations from Czech **has**

**gradually started to rise:** from 2012–2017, 2.7 titles were published on average annually, from 2018–2022 this was now 7 titles annually.

To a large degree this is down to the long-term efforts of the **Paris Czech Centre**, which is continually developing its own programme aimed at literature, illustration and book culture. It regularly invites Czech writers to Paris and it administers the social network group **La Librairie virtuelle tchèque**. It works with French universities and Czech departments, libraries and memory institutions, and it brings together French and Czech partners. The Czech Centre was also behind the publication of an important bibliography designed for publishers and librarians on the translated Czech literature which exists in the book distribution network. In 2021, it opened **a unique library** which continues to acquire literature translated from Czech and offers one of the largest collections of contemporary Czech prose, poetry, comics and works for children. Moreover, the Czech Centre was behind the significant traditional literary event – **Literature Night** (May) – which is organized by a network of foreign cultural institutions in Paris. Recently it has been organizing the **Echoes of Literature Night** (September), a festival of Czech literature taking place all over France.

CzechLit's activities – for example, its publishers' presentations and trips – help to create a communication network between Czech publishers and agents and their French counterparts. **The growing interest in literature**

**for children and young adults as well as in comics has been particularly striking**, which is in keeping with the growth of this sector of the book trade in general. Apart from France, Czech literature is also published in French by **several Swiss publishers**, while in **Algeria** the very first translation from Czech into French will be appearing soon (Štěpán Kučera – Don Quixote's Greatest Lesson).

CzechLit also regularly organizes presentations of published books, particularly in cooperation with the Paris Czech Centre, but also as part of international festivals (for example, Littératures européennes in Cognac).

In the future it is planning to hold regular networking and information meetings for publishers. Books that have already been published will be promoted by sending authors to promotional events and prestigious international literary festivals. It also strengthens the comics industry by linking Czech and French artists to international networks, ideally through residencies in the **French town of comics**, Angoulême.

## Hispanic areas



Each year **approximately 8 translations from Czech are published in Hispanic areas**, in particular prose, comics, and literature for children and young adults. The Madrid Czech Centre was heavily involved in agency work up until 2017. Publishers tend to be interested in

older writers as well as contemporary authors. In cooperation with the Madrid Czech Centre and publishers, every year CzechLit supports an **average of three trips by writers to Spain and the presentation of their current translations**.

Since it was established, CzechLit has been building on the Madrid Czech Centre's work and contacts, particularly in the promotion of Czech literature across Spain, but also in **Latin American countries**. With the help of these contacts several publishers' trips have been arranged in the Czech Republic for Spanish publishers. CzechLit coordinators also contact publishers personally during business trips to fairs (LIBER, Feria del Libro de Madrid, Feria del Libro de León), where they present previously unpublished authors to Spanish and Latin American publishers and provide information about the Czech Ministry of Culture's grant supports, support for authors to travel, and residencies for translators.

In recent years, **Czech poetry has been extremely successful** and one significant event was the publication of an **anthology of 17 contemporary female Czech poets by the Mexican-Spanish publishing house Vaso Roto** (*De sombra y terciopelo. Dicsiete poetas checas* 1963-1988, Vaso Roto, 2021), thanks to an initiative which was part of the Czech presentation at the **largest Spanish-language literary festival in Mexico's Guadalajara**, organized by the Madrid Czech Centre and the Czech Ministry of Culture in 2017. This anthology will also

be presented as **part of the European Union's guest programme** at the international book fair in Guadalajara in November 2023. A similar anthology was also brought out by the same publishing house in 2012.

Contacts between the Czech and Spanish literary scenes have also been widened through cooperation with the **Prague office of the Instituto Cervantes**, which has resulted in, for example, **a series of Czech-Spanish literary readings and the Illustrated Dialogues project**, aimed at the support of comics creators.

Its objective in the coming years is to further support writers and the publication of their work, including writers' residencies in Spain. There will also be support for young Czech Studies scholars and young translators in the form of translation seminars and translators' residencies in the Czech Republic. There will also be attempts to make new contacts **in the Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America**.

At present, Czech authors regularly visit the **FILBI literary fair in Bogota**, organized by a local expat group in cooperation with the Czech embassy in Colombia and the Czech Ministry of Culture.

## Other areas



The Czech Centres organization also works with CzechLit in the presentation of Czech

literature in other areas, albeit to a lesser extent. These include **south-east Europe, Egypt, Israel, South Korea and Japan**. In the countries where Czech Centres operate they are involved in a number of aspects connected to **literature and book culture** (the presentation of The Most Beautiful Czech Books of the Year), they **support exhibition projects** (children's books for entertainment) and **poetry readings in public areas**. The presentation of different forms of literature is based on a knowledge of the area and long-standing contacts. In a number of countries the centres ensure **Czech participation at book fairs and festivals** (Seoul, Warsaw, Kyiv, Budapest, Tokyo) **and at comics festivals** (Sweden, Poland, Ukraine, Italy).

Another important activity of the Czech Centres for developing contacts in literature is the organization of trips for curators, which the centres provide for their international partners (Greece, Colombia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Great Britain, Italy, France) and facilitate their participation at Czech literary festivals and other literary events. The Czech Centres' partnership in awarding literature prizes (Magnesia Litera, Muriel) and subsequently acquiring residencies for the winners through the Czech Centres abroad is also important.



# Czech Tourism





**The CzechTourism Agency** is a state organization with a **thirty-year history**. Its basic objective is to promote the Czech Republic as an attractive tourist destination for both international and local visitors. The CzechTourism Agency was established by the Czech Ministry for Regional Development.

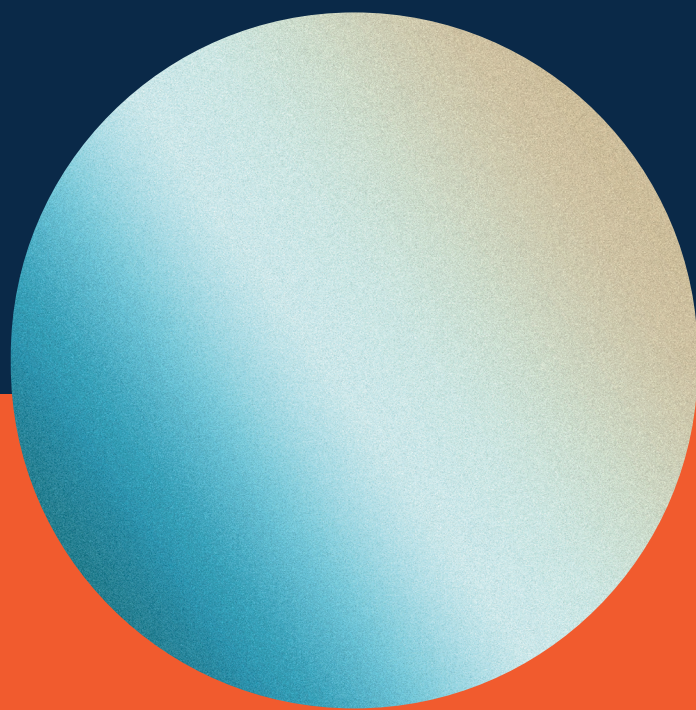
The CzechTourism Agency helps in the organization of important international and regional cultural, sporting and social events. It regularly appears as the main marketing and media coordinator of government and interagency projects, such as the **commemoration and celebration of the 700th anniversary of the birth of Charles IV (2016), the 100th anniversary of the foundation of Czechoslovakia (2018), and 30 years of freedom and democracy (2019)**.

At the 2026 Frankfurt Book Fair, the CzechTourism Agency will present Czechia as **an attractive place to visit and stay for German and other international tourists**. In its presentation it can point to Czechia's rich cultural heritage, geographical proximity and strong cultural-historical ties with Germany. The focus of attention will be on UNESCO-listed Czech monuments, the country's musical history which is linked to famous composers such as Leoš Janáček, Antonín Dvořák, Bohuslav Martinů and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, traditional and modern takes on Czech cuisine, and the Czech candidates for the **European Capital of Culture 2028: Broumov and České Budějovice**.

In Frankfurt, the CzechToursim Agency will place special emphasis on **presenting Czechia as a country of literature**. Visitors will be inspired to set out in the footsteps of famous international and Czech writers, from Goethe to Allen Ginsberg, Václav Havel and Jaroslav Rudiš. In addition to highlighting historical and modern libraries, there will also be a focus on museums, monuments and valuable exhibitions related to the history of literature.

The CzechToursim Agency provides inspiration to travel around Czechia through modern interactive technologies and virtual reality.

# Czech— German Common Interests



## Inter-cultural dialogue and the development of international cooperation



Czechia's long-term goal is to **firmly tie Czech cultural institutions to international projects and to establish long-term collaboration with institutions of global significance**. In order to develop international cooperation it is necessary to **link Czech specialists and professionals from cultural and creative sectors to European and international networks**. Specialist platforms provide space to actively share knowledge and experience, which is then followed by the transfer of best practices to a local setting.

## Cooperation with Germany



There has been a dynamic upsurge in the cooperation between Czechia and Germany in recent years. **On both sides the cultural exchange has been of high quality** and there is shared interest in further extending the long-term cooperation and mutual dialogue between the two countries. Cultural cooperation was set out in 1999 with the **Declaration between the Government of the Czech Republic and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany**. Cooperation with Bavaria was then detailed in the

Memorandum of Understanding between the Czech Ministry of Culture and the Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Science and Art of the Free State of Bavaria from 2015.

## Czech-German strategic dialogue



The Strategic Dialogue is an **important tool for furthering Czech-German cooperation**. Its objective is to define priority areas for the development of shared projects. The Strategic Dialogue resulted from a 2014 Czech government initiative, which aimed to strategically set out the relationship with the Federal Republic of Germany as **Czechia's most important partner and neighbour**.

## Cross-border cooperation



Cross-border cultural and economic cooperation and exchange continues to improve the understanding between both countries.

Some of the cultural institutions which try to bring Czechs closer to the citizens of Bavaria include the **Bavaria Bohemia Centre** in Schönsee, the **Kunstverein Hochfranken society** in Selb, and the **Ackermann-Gemeinde and Adalbert Stifter Society** in Munich.



One important example of the ties between the two countries was the joint organization of **the Czech-Bavarian exhibition dedicated to the important historical figure, Emperor Charles IV**, on the 700th anniversary of his birth, which was held to wide acclaim in Prague and Nuremberg. Six years later another joint project by the National Museum in Prague and the House of Bavarian History – the **“Baroque in Bavaria and Bohemia”** exhibition – is to be held from 2023–2024 in Regensburg and Prague.

As with Bavaria, **the cross-border cooperation with Saxony** has also been increasing. There is a focus on current issues of cooperation in transport infrastructure, business, the environment, policing and emergency services, culture, education, student exchanges, and so on. An important joint project is **Days of Czech and German Culture** in Dresden, Ústí nad Labem and the Euroregion Elbe/Labe. In addition, there is also the **Neisse Filmfestival**, which is held in Saxony, Bohemia and Poland.

## UNESCO



Czechia and Germany also **work together as part of the UNESCO programme**. One example is the successful addition of the **“Hornický region Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří”** as a transnational monument to the World Heritage List in 2019, the nomination of which was coordinated by Saxony.

**“The Great Spa Towns of Europe”** was then successfully added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in July 2021. Of the eleven listed towns, three of them lie on the Czech side (Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně) and three on the German side (Baden-Baden, Bad Ems and Bad Kissingen) of our shared border.

In 2018, **“Blueprint, Resist Block Printing and Indigo Dyeing in Europe”** was added to the prestigious UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, nominated jointly by Czechia, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Slovakia.

In December 2022, the transnationally nominated **Timber Rafting** was added to this list, which was jointly organized by six European countries including Czechia and Germany.

Since 2020, Czechia and Germany have been working together on the transnational nomination **“Handmade Glass”**.

## Literature, music, theatre, history



The Czech Ministry of Culture regularly supports a number of established and newly emerging Czech-German cultural activities, such as the **Prague German Language Theatre Festival**, the **Festival of German Jazz**, cooperation between the **Prague Literature House** and the **Oberpfalz Literature House**, and the **Days of Czech Culture** in Dresden.

The **Musica non grata** project has been running since 2019, organized by the State Opera of Prague's National Theatre together with the German embassy in Prague and the Goethe Institute. It is a four-year cycle of opera productions, concert performances of operas, and symphonic and chamber concerts, which aims to present Czech and German music, particularly by Jewish composers working in Prague from 1910–1930, who were persecuted by the Nazi regime.

There have been successful partnerships between memory institutions. The Terezín Memorial works in close cooperation – not only in terms of exhibitions – with the Flossenbürg Memorial, the Buchenwald Memorial, the Dachau Memorial, and the House of the Wannsee Conference. The Lidice Memorial has also been working together with Germany for a long period.

## The Czech-German Fund for the Future



Since its establishment in 1998, the Czech-German Fund for the Future has provided **74 million euros to more than 12,600 joint projects for Czech-German understanding**. Around 35% of these activities have taken place in Czechia, 30% in Germany, and 35% in both countries. Some of the most important areas of support include youth exchanges and cultural cooperation, highlight-

ing important cultural phenomena and events in the neighbouring country, the presentation of the contemporary art scenes and bilateral cultural projects by professional and amateur artists. Examples include the Prague German Language Theatre Festival, the Czech-German Days of Culture in the Saxon capital of Dresden, the Collegium 1704 music ensemble, the Prague Literature House and the Bavaria-Bohemia Centre in Bavaria's Schönsee, and dozens of other smaller cultural events each year.

In the past, the fund has also been a partner of the Czech-German Cultural Spring, Czechia's participation at the Leipzig Book Fair, the Czech cultural seasons in Dresden, and current cooperation between Czech and German libraries as part of the Library Next Door programme. **The fund would also be involved in the preparations for Czechia as guest of honour at Frankfurt in 2026.**



# The Conception of the Guest- of-Honour Project





The **Moravian Library** (MZK) was authorized by the Czech Ministry of Culture to organize the entire project. The project is being realized by the MZK through its own institution, the **Czech Literary Centre** (CzechLit). The CzechLit team, consisting of area specialists, works in Prague and cooperates closely with the trade-fair department of the Moravian Library in Brno, and also uses its administrative and legal support for its activities.

The MZK is based in Brno, the capital of Moravia, but its activities go beyond both the field of librarianship and the borders of Czechia. It is the second largest library in Czechia and at the same time a library which receives a **legal deposit of every book published in Czechia** by law (since 1925). It holds a collection of more than **4.5 million publications**, including valuable historical manuscripts and old and more recent editions of Czech and foreign literature. The MZK is an invaluable partner for the research work of students and academics, offering them 800 study places in departmental reading rooms with a number of complementary services. There are also diverse educational and cultural programmes, offering the general public both entertainment and knowledge. It started administering the **Milan Kundera Library** (KMK) in 2023, which was established thanks to a donation from the Kunderas, which included Milan Kundera's library and archive. The objective of the KMK is to discover what might connect us intellectually by addressing prominent world thinkers. There will be lectures, debates and a pro-

gramme focusing on literature, culture, issues of European identity and civic society.

The MZK also aims to expand its online services: its programmers are developing a central tool for Czech librarianship to provide access to digitalized books and journals, to work with digital maps, and to access the national Knihovny.cz website, which allows users to **search for and order documents from all of the libraries in Czechia**. The MZK also collaborates on a large number of scientific projects – from the study of historical collections to digitalization and technological innovation, such as the development of software to transcribe manuscript texts.

The MZK has signed an agreement on scientific cooperation with, among others, the Saxon State and University Library in Dresden, the Slovak National Library, the National Library of France and the National Museum of Literature in Taiwan. It has long-standing ties with the Sorbonne University in Paris, Sapienza University in Rome, the universities in Leipzig, Granada and Udine, as well as with the top Czech universities (Charles University, Masaryk University, Palacký University in Olomouc, the University of South Bohemia in České Budějovice, and the Brno University of Technology). Since 2014, **the MZK has also been authorized by the Czech Ministry of Culture to present and promote Czech literature at international book fairs**.

Together with the guest-of-honour programme for the 2026 Frankfurt Book Fair, the

MZK and CzechLit, in close cooperation with the Czech Ministry of Culture and under the guidance of the Dramaturgical Board, are organizing other activities to support the **translation of Czech literature – into German as well as English, French and Spanish.**

In the project's preparatory phase the translation of Czech literature into other languages will be **financially strengthened by a grant from the Czech Ministry of Culture** (see chapter 12, Project Budget). In relation to this, the CzechLit's territorial specialists and literary agents will focus on searching for contact publishers in these priority areas:

- **Germany** (5 main presentation areas: Frankfurt/Main, Berlin, Munich, Cologne, Hamburg)
- **other German-speaking countries** (Austria, Switzerland)
- **English-speaking countries** (USA, Great Britain)
- **Hispanic countries** (Spain, Portugal, Latin America)
- **France.**

The contacts that were made when Czechia was the main guest at the Leipzig Book Fair in 2019 will be used in the German-speaking countries.

CzechLit will be organizing publishers' trips from these priority areas to international fairs and festivals (between two and three from each area). At the same time, it is counting

on the participation of foreign publishers at the international Book World Prague fair from 2024–2026: in 2024, the fair and its literary festival will focus on German-speaking countries.

In 2026, there will be an increase in funds for the Mobility Programme, which **enables Czech writers to travel to literary events abroad** (festivals, readings, book launches, lectures, debates, etc.). The event organizer or the writer can apply for help with travel costs. The support is designed for the mobility of creative people from literature and book culture (authors, illustrators), while other professionals in book culture can apply for support from the short-term mobility fund from the Arts Institute – Theatre Institute.

CzechLit will also continue to **focus on support for translators**, including those just starting out. In addition to the aforementioned priority areas, another objective is to strengthen the presence of Czech Studies scholars and translators in the Nordic countries and the Baltic states in particular, where there is scope for development. CzechLit will send out calls for residencies from these areas, organize translation seminars and workshops, and it will promote Czech culture in cooperation with its partners.

In collaboration with the 2024 and 2025 Frankfurt Book Fairs, CzechLit would like to offer seminars for translators of Czech literature.

An important factor for the success of the project will be **press trips and bloggers' trips**



**to Czechia, organized by a professional PR agency in Germany.** There are plans for four trips for between 20 and 30 participants in 2025 and 2026.

During the same period – 2025–2026 – a team will also focus on booksellers. Around **twenty booksellers from Germany will visit Czechia** as part of two trips. They will then be able to familiarize themselves with life in Czechia, meet writers and translators, and as a result have a **better grasp of the context of the books being offered for translation into German.** They should then become their ‘ambassadors’ in bookshops and other places where books are sold to readers.

The most visible aspect of being guest of honour in October 2026 will be our **national stand and presentation in the pavilion of the Frankfurt Exhibition Grounds**, created by representatives of the creative industries and designers to reflect the key metaphor of ‘**Czechia – A Country on the Coast**’. Over five days, approximately 80 writers will travel to Frankfurt from Czechia and they will appear at around 100 events.

From 2024–2026, the project will be systematically supported by professional media communication through a PR agency in Germany, as well as by marketing activities and digital communication on the social networks Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. The project will also have its own website.

An evaluation of the project will be carried out

in the first half of 2027, and at the same time there will be **follow-up literary events**, in German-speaking areas in particular, entitled “**Echoes of Czechia**”. Here, writers will be presented along with their new translations. We will also link them to debates about their participation at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2026, and the responses from the world of culture and literature. With an eye to sustaining the project, there will be further grant incentives for publishers across the world whose attention was captured by the presentation of Czech literature in Frankfurt.

Another part of the project is the promotion of **contemporary Czech playwrights and their work.**

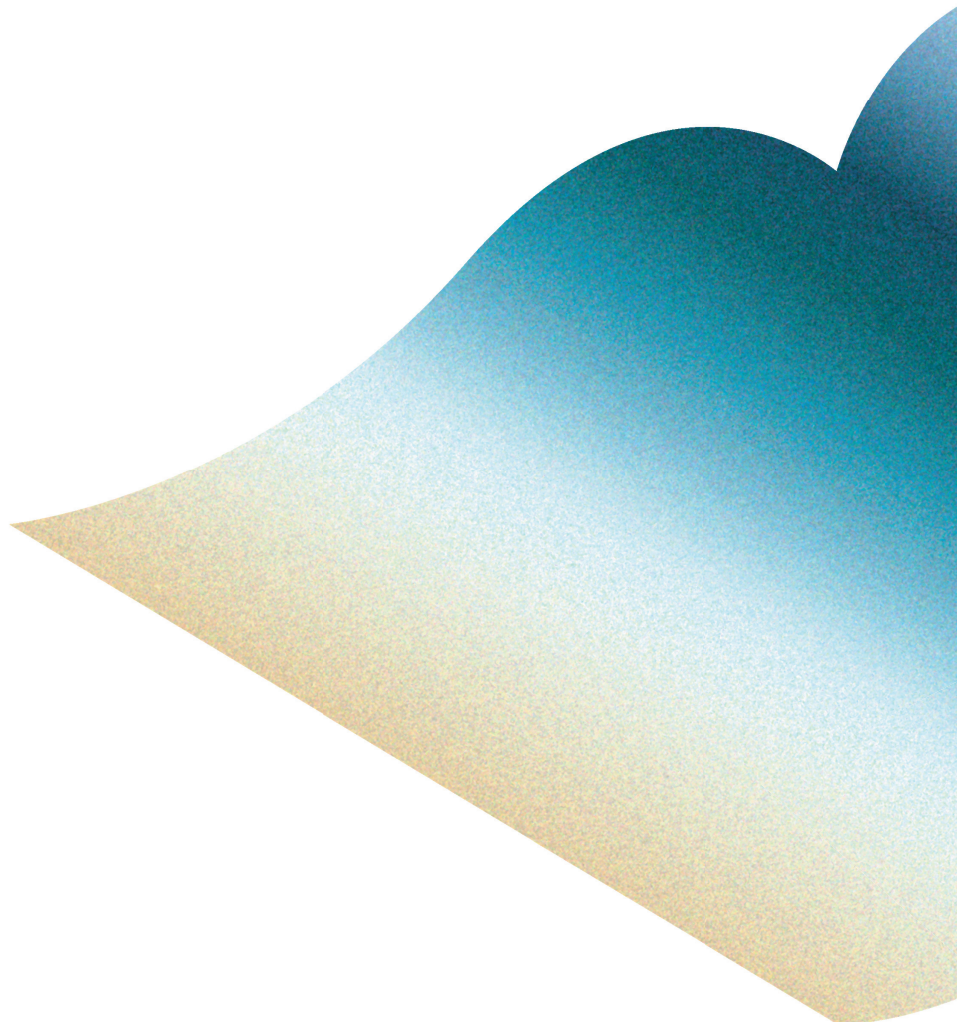
The Arts Institute – Theatre Institute (IDU) is actively involved in this area and is **compiling an anthology of contemporary Czech drama in English** in collaboration with a publisher from Great Britain this year.

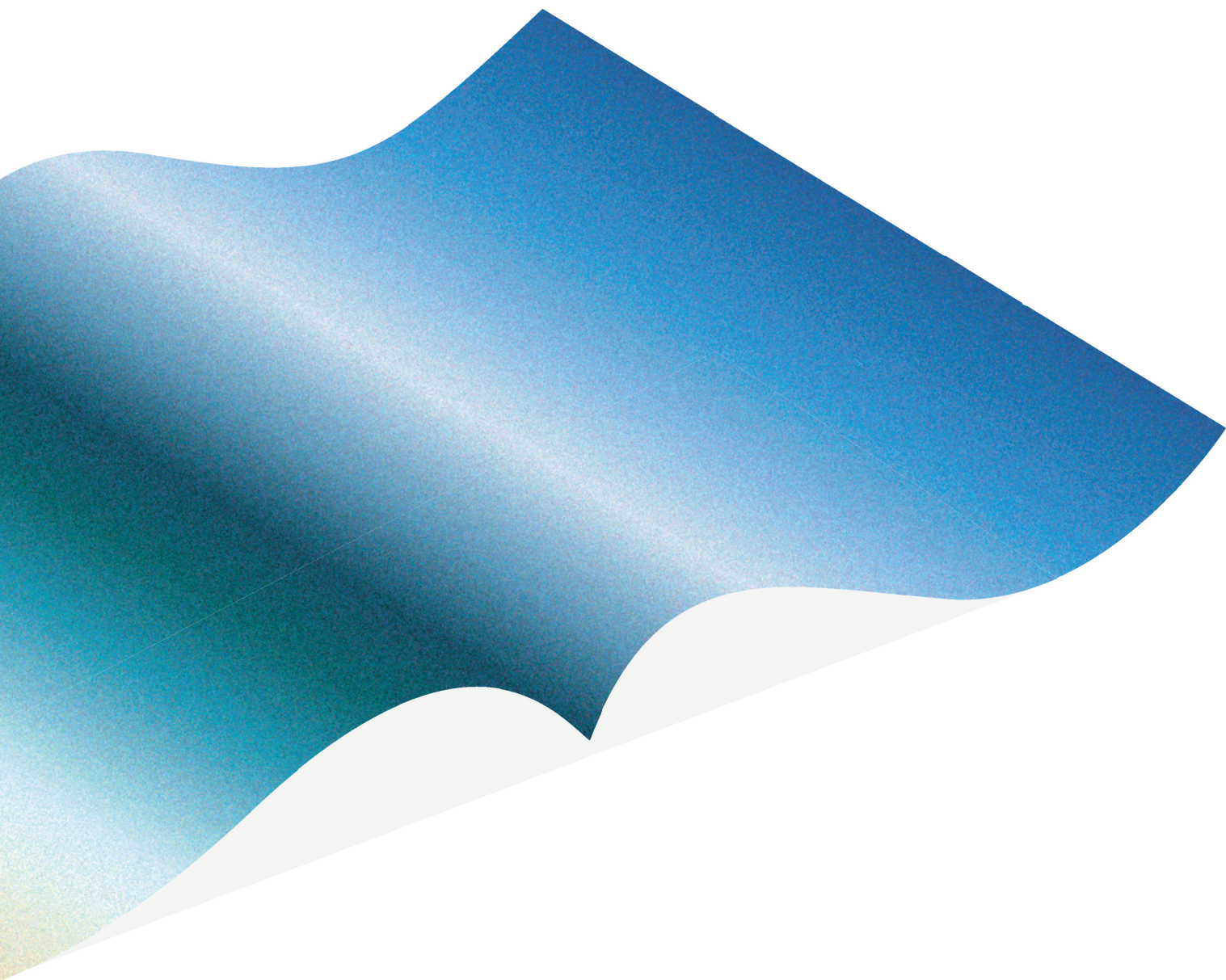
The presentation of Czech authors in a digital environment is also relevant here (the website [www.performczech.cz](http://www.performczech.cz)), which will contain authors’ video-biographies, written information about the authors, their work and its presentation in Czechia and abroad, as well as audio extracts from selected plays in English.

As part of the cultural programme accompanying Czechia as the guest of honour, there will be an opportunity for **networking and developing the project in other artistic genres such as music.**

**SoundCzech** – the official music office which aims to help export Czech music abroad irrespective of genre – is particularly active in this respect. It was established in 2017 as part of the Arts Institute and is financed through the budget of the Czech Ministry of Culture.

SoundCzech focuses on cultural cooperation as part of the ProVisit project – an international network of music professionals. In 2023, it is organizing the ProVisit in Hamburg, and it will present the Czech music scene at music fairs and showcase festivals such as the Reeperbahn Festival. The Frankfurt Book Fair in 2026 will also be another opportunity to develop the ProVisit programme for the future.







# Dramaturgical Board

When preparing for Czechia's opportunity to be guest of honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2026, Martin Baxa, the Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic, appointed a Dramaturgical Board in December 2022, consisting of 22 representatives from the book and literature industry, from cultural institutes, as well as culture managers and translators:

## **Tomáš Kubíček**

**Moravian Library**

Czech Studies scholar and literary historian, he worked at the Institute for Czech Literature of the Czech Academy of Sciences, where he founded the department of prose theory and the tradition of narratological research, he was the head of the Czech Studies department at Palacký University in Olomouc. He has been the director of the Moravian Library since 2014. He lectures at Charles University. He has published monographs on narratology and Czech literature of the 20th century.

## **Martin Krafl**

**Moravian Library / Czech Literary Centre**

A culture manager focusing on the promotion of literature, also a journalist, presenter and press spokesperson. He currently works at the MZK as programme coordinator for the presentation of the Czech Republic at international book fairs and he is also head of CzechLit.

## **Petr Hnízdo**

**Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic**

Director of the Department of International Relations at the Ministry of Culture, he was the director of the Liaison Office in Vienna, Head of the European Office in Brussels – Central Bohemian Region, as well as Head of the International Department of the Czech Ministry of Transport, and the PR manager at the German School in Prague.

## **Radim Kopáček**

**Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic**

He works in the Department of Literature and Libraries at the Czech Ministry of Culture. A literary and art critic, author of a number of books dealing with the peripheries of Czech literature and culture over the centuries.

## **Adriana Krásová**

**Czech Centres**

For several years, she was the director of the Madrid Czech Centre, a coordinator of the Literature Night project, a Czech Centres specialist in literature and translator. She has contributed to a large number of international cultural projects.



## Jan Herget

CzechTourism

Director of the CzechTourism Agency, he was the director of the Prague branch of VisitBritain and the PR director/press spokesperson for the government agency CzechTrade. He has worked at the Department of Tourism of the University of Economics since 2006. As a guest professor he has lectured at universities in Northern Colorado in the USA, Lahti in Finland and Steyr in Austria.

## Pavla Petrová

Arts Institute – Theatre Institute

A culture manager with many years' experience of cultural institutions and projects. Since 2008 she has been the director of the Arts Institute – Theatre Institute and the general director of Prague Quadrennial, the largest scenography exhibition in the world. She has been a member of expert bodies, networks and platforms in the Czech Republic and abroad. She wrote the national profile of the Czech Republic for the Compendia of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe. In addition to working at the Arts Management Department of the University of Economics in Prague, she also gives lectures at the Academy of Performing Arts, especially DAMU and FAMU.

## Dana Blatná

literary agent

A literary agent who specializes in contemporary Czech fiction. She works closely with Host, one of the leading Czech publishers. She represents both bestselling authors and recipients of prestigious literary awards.

## Petr A. Bílek

prose specialist

Czech literary critic and historian, head of the Department of Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. He specializes in textual interpretation, narratology and the methodologies of literary and cultural history. He has written nearly fifty studies, which in addition to being published in Czech and Slovak have also been translated into English, French, German, Italian, Hungarian, Croatian and Japanese.

## Pavel Kořínek

comics specialist

A literary critic, historian and comics theoretician, he works at the Institute for Czech Literature of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Together with Tomáš Prokůpek, Martin Foret and Michal Jareš he published A History of 20th Century Czechoslovak Comics, and the handbook In Panels and Bubbles, Chapters from a Theory of Comics. He compiled the monograph and anthology Punťa – A Forgotten

ten Hero of Czech Comics 1934–1942 together with Lucie Kořínková.

## Jana Čeňková

specialist in literature for children and young adults

She works at the Department of Journalism at the Institute of Communication Studies, and the Department of Journalism at Charles University's Faculty of Social Sciences. She focuses on the history, criticism and editing of Czech literature and also organizes book exhibitions. She specializes in the history and criticism of literature and illustration for children and young adults. In recent years she published the collective monograph *Wartime Childhood and Youth (1938-1945) in Literature and Journalism*, and *Do you Know Who a Poet is? Poetry for Children and Young Readers*. Her studies have also been published in German and Japanese.

## Olga Stehlíková

poetry specialist

Writer, editor, journalist and literary critic. She specializes mainly in contemporary Czech poetry and prose. She has contributed towards the preparation of dozens of books for different publishing houses, she promotes Czech poetry – i.e. on the radio and TV, she has written five poetry collections and five books for children and young adults. She is a recipient of the Magnesia Litera for

Poetry, and the Tvárnice prize for critic of the year.

## Martin Janeček

non-fiction specialist

He works for Karolinum Publishers in the international department and as its deputy director. He has long been involved in non-fiction, the translation of Czech literature, and Czech Studies abroad.

## Christina Frankenberg

translator, Czech Studies scholar

Czech Studies scholar, translator, deputy director of the Berlin Czech Centre, responsible for the centre's cultural programme, particularly for literature, film and Czech Studies. She translates contemporary prose and texts from literature, literary criticism, art and history.

## Jean-Gaspard Páleníček

translator, curator

A Czech-French writer, translator and curator. He graduated in Czech Studies and literary criticism from Charles University and Paris-Sorbonne. He worked at the Paris Czech Centre as a curator and exhibition organizer; he has written several piano compositions. He has translated into French works by Miloš Doležal, Vladimír Holan, Bohumil Hrabal, J. H. Krchovský, Jaroslav Seifert, Richard Weiner and others.

## Radovan Auer

Book World international book fair

He has devoted his whole professional life to culture management. For ten years he held various posts at the film festival in Karlovy Vary, he was an executive producer of the film *Loners*, he was also the marketing director of the Plzeň 2015 – European Capital of Culture project. He is currently the director of the Book World Prague International Book Fair and Literary Festival. He is on the Advisory Board of the Czech Literary Centre.

## Michal Zahálka

Community of Translators

Theatrolgist, dramaturge and translator from English and French. He is a book editor at the Arts Institute – Theatre Institute, he is also an external editor and translator for Argo publishers. He is a member of the dramaturgical board of the International Festival THEATRE in Plzeň and a PhD student at Charles University's Institute of Translation Studies.

## Jan Němec

Association of Writers

Writer and journalist. He was chair of the Association of Writers from 2014 to 2016. He has been the editor-in-chief of the literary monthly *Host* since 2022. His most well-known works include *A History of Light*,

which won the EU Prize for Literature in 2014, and the autofiction *Ways of Writing about Love*.

## Daniel Podhradský

Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers

Publisher and owner of Dauphin publishing house, also a journalist, editor and book graphic designer. He has been running his publishing company since 1994 and has brought out more than 500 titles of mostly challenging fiction, philosophy and poetry. He is the founder of the LitArt Foundation, the professional association The Publishers' Guild, the Cooperative Work association, he is on the executive board of the Association of Czech Booksellers and Publishers and chair of the commission for small publishers and fiction. He is the founder and main organizer of BookFest and the offshoots – Parukářka Book, Book Solstice and others.

## Klára Fleyberková

journalist and dramaturge

She writes about the theatre and art but mainly about literature. She works as a literary dramaturge for the Vltava radio station and as an editor for the monthly journal *Host*. She graduated in Aesthetics from Charles University and Theory and Criticism from DAMU. As part of Czech Radio's creative group Drama and Literature she was responsible for the

short-story series, though she was also involved in different formats.

## Renáta Fučíková

illustrator, designer

A Czech artist and illustrator, head of the Didactic Illustration studio at the Ladislav Sutnar Faculty of Design and Art. She focuses mainly on the creation of books on history. She has won several prizes including the Golden Ribbon on several occasions, three nominations for a Magnesia Litera award, the Grand Prix in Zagreb in 2018, and awards at the Biennial of Illustration in Tehran in 1997. In Czechia, she was nominated for the prestigious Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award three times in a row between 2011 and 2013.

## Jiří Suchánek

culture manager

Director of the DEPO2015 Plzeň creative zone. He is familiar with exhibition pavilions and large cultural projects thanks to his participation in the Plzeň 2015 – European Capital of Culture, EXPO2010 – Shanghai, EXPO2017 – Astana, and EXPO2020 – Dubai.






# Budget



## Income (in thousands)



Category		Amount CZK	Amount EUR
A	State support – Ministry of Culture, Czechia – guest of honour project	162 477	6 499
B	State support – Ministry of Culture, Czechia – participation of Czechia at international book fairs in Germany 2024–2026	15 343	614
C	State support – Ministry of Culture, Czechia – Echoes of Czechia 2027 – participation of Czechia at international book fairs in Germany	6 477	259
D	State support – Ministry of Culture, Czechia – Echoes of Czechia 2027	13 218	529
<b>TOTAL – income</b>		<b>197 515</b>	<b>7 901</b>

## Costs (in thousands)

Category		Amount CZK	Amount EUR
I	Preparatory events, programme 2024–2026	24 016	961
II	Programme during the fair	16 944	678
III	Other cultural events, exhibitions	2 900	116
IV	Support of Czech literature translations – increasing the annual grant of the Ministry of Culture, Czechia, in connection with being the main guest	30 000	1 200
V	Pavilion of the guest country	10 250	410
VI	Guest country book-fair marketing	1 000	40
VII	Team/management and administration	40 438	1 618
VIII	Catering expenses, receptions	8 900	356
IX	PR, press trips	31 912	1 276
X	Fair fees (office, project preparation)	9 282	371
XI	National stand	8 240	330
XII	Dramaturgical board (22 members)	975	39
XIII	Other	6 181	247
XIV	Echoes of Czechia 2027 – Participation of Czechia at international book fairs in Germany	6 477	259
<b>TOTAL – costs</b>		<b>197 515</b>	<b>7 901</b>

For the given period, in addition to the costs for the guest-of-honour project, the budget will also include the costs for Czechia's regular national presentations at the international book fairs in Leipzig and Frankfurt/Main from 2024-2027. The expected increase in support for the translation of Czech literature from 2024-2027 will amount to a total of approximately 55 million CZK. For the purpose of calculating the budget in EUR, the conversion of 1 EUR = 25 CZK was used.





# Czechia



A COUNTRY ON THE COAST



MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
CZECH REPUBLIC

The Ministry of Culture  
of the Czech Republic,  
Minister of Culture Martin Baxa



Moravian Library,  
director Tomáš Kubíček



Czech Literary Centre,  
Head Coordinator Martin Krafl

### **Editor**

Petr Stančík

### **Translation from Czech to English**

Graeme Dibble

### **Proofreading**

Alžběta Belánová

### **Concept and content**

Dramaturgical Board

### **Head Coordinator**

Martin Krafl

### **Production**

Moravian Library Trade Fair Department

### **PR support**

Anna Mrázová

### **Graphic layout**

Pavel Tazbirek

### **Printing**

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Nové Město nad Metují

### **Closing date**

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