

PART III  
*Chapter 5*

## **Czech Republic**

Main characteristics of the Czech Republic fishing sector . . . . .	116
Czech Republic – Summary statistics . . . . .	117
ADDITIONAL DETAILS . . . . .	118
Legal and institutional framework . . . . .	118
Aquaculture . . . . .	118
Fisheries and the environment . . . . .	119
Government financial transfers . . . . .	119
Outlook . . . . .	120

### **Main characteristics of the Czech Republic fishing sector**

The Czech Republic is a landlocked country with no sea fisheries but important aquaculture (pond-based) production of carp. Carp breeding is rooted in the history, culture and society of the Czech Republic and has proved highly profitable since the 15th century. The Czech Republic has over 24 000 ponds and tanks, mostly in southern Bohemia and covering a total of around 50 000 hectares.

Pond aquaculture is subject to restrictions governing surface-water use. Output is contingent on rational harvesting levels, which in turn are based on external initiatives for maximum environmental protection. Most problems are caused by silting in the ponds as well as from other functions not directly related to production such as flood prevention, environmental protection and recreation.

In 2005, approximately 8 000 tonnes of live fish were sold domestically (45% of total production), the majority of which was carp. 8 300 tonnes of live fish were exported (47% of production) and 1 500 tonnes were used in processing (8% of production). Imports of fish (consisting almost entirely of sea fish) and other aquatic animals totalled 38 700 tonnes in 2005. Annual consumption of fish and fish products in the Czech Republic has been 5 kg per capita for decades.

Freshwater fish account for one kilogram of this consumption and the remainder consists of imported sea fish. In the Czech Republic, mandatory compliance with EU rules, laws and standards regarding free trade and movement of goods exists. Companies in this sector are privately owned (as one of two types of limited-liability Company). The market is not regulated by the State and is fully transparent.

In 2003 and 2004, the main export destinations for fish and fish products from the Czech Republic were Germany, Slovakia, Austria, Belgium and Poland. This remained the case for 2005, although France had replaced Belgium in fourth place.

The fisheries sector in the Czech Republic is responsible for 0.04% of GNP. This amounts to CZK 1.1 billion. The gross agricultural output of the Czech Republic accounts for 4.42% of GNP.

## Czech Republic – Summary statistics

Figure III.5.1. **Harvesting and aquaculture production**

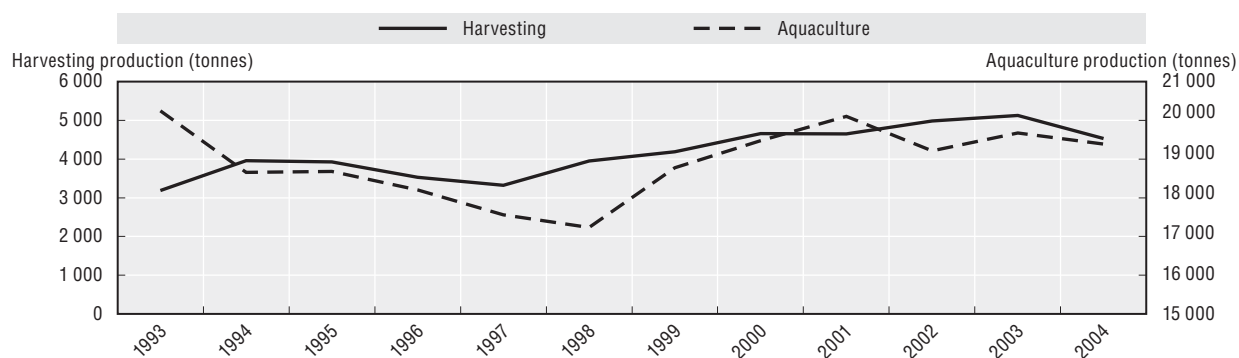


Figure III.5.2. **Species produced by value**

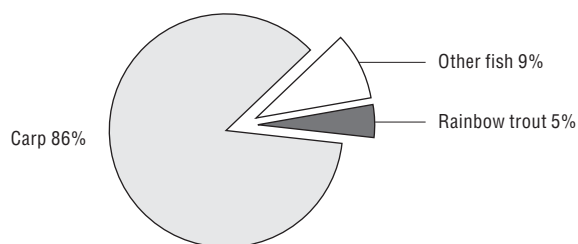


Figure III.5.3. **Evolution of government financial transfers in aquaculture**

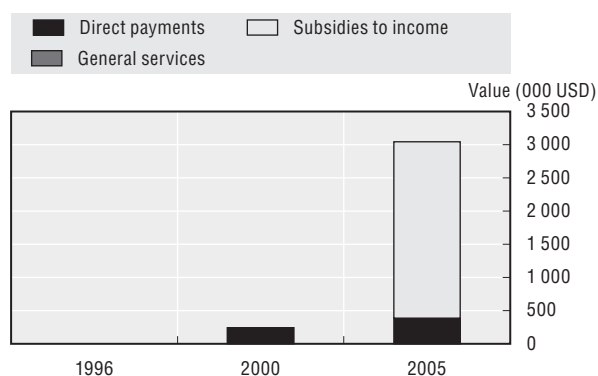


Figure III.5.4. **Trade evolution**

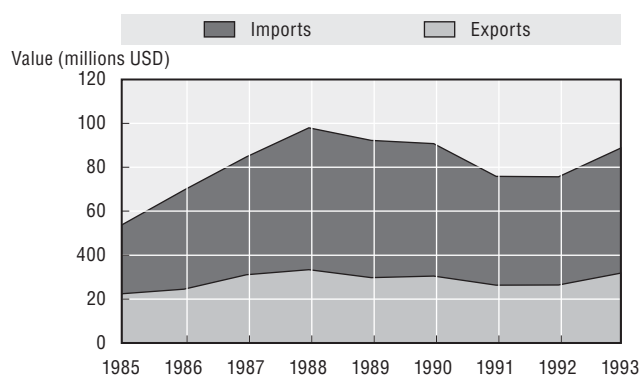


Figure III.5.5. **Production profile**

	1996	2005
Number of fishers	n.a.	n.a.
Number of fish farmers	2 495 <sup>1</sup>	1 679
Total number of vessels	n.a.	n.a.
Total tonnage of the fleet	n.a.	n.a.

n.a.: Not available.

1. Fish farmers in 1999.

Source: Figures III.5.1 and III.5.4: FAO; Figures III.5.2, III.5.3 and III.5.5: OECD.

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS

### Legal and institutional framework

Fishing activities are defined by relatively new legislation (Act No. 99/2004) covering two basic areas: pond fish-farming and the production of freshwater fish; and fishing activities in fishing reserves (recreational/sport fishing).

National legislation on fish production is closely based on the provisions of EU legislation. The Act also addresses the issue of the protection of aquatic resources. It identifies the authorities responsible for fisheries, i.e. municipal and regional authorities and ministries, and specifies that the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for fisheries management at central government level.

### Management

The Czech Republic became an EU member on 1 June 2004, and has participated in the following programmes in connection with this membership:

- a) The EU's SAPARD (Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development) programme was designed to provide support for measures aimed at increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of the agricultural and agribusiness sectors, job creation and sustainable economic development in rural areas. The programme provided an EU pre-accession strategy for the 10 candidate countries acceding in 2004. The SAPARD Programme was available to these candidate countries from May 2002 until end-2005. The Czech Republic granted the subsidies provided under this programme primarily for the renovation of fish-processing facilities and covered 14 projects in total.
- b) The EU's Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) programme aimed to ensure a balanced use of fisheries resources. It also promoted competitiveness in the sector and the development of areas dependent upon it. One of the FIFG areas of action was also the development of aquaculture. This programme lasted (in the Czech Republic) from April 2004 until April 2006.
- c) The Czech operational programme Rural Development and Multifunctional Agriculture supports 21 projects in fish processing, markets and marketing of fish products; aquaculture/fish farming; activities performed by fishery specialists and promotional advertising measures. The programme also supports the food safety of fishery products. Three government authorities in the Czech Republic are responsible for consumer protection: the State Inspectorate for Agriculture and Food, the Czech Trade Inspectorate, and the State Veterinary Administration (government).

### Aquaculture

Annual aquaculture production in the Czech Republic is 20 000 mt (live weight). Fish farming has developed in artificial bodies of water which are located chiefly in provincial regions. In all, there are some 24 000 ponds and tanks in the Czech Republic, covering a total surface area of approximately 52 000 hectares. Aquaculture relies on labour recruited primarily in regions characterised by a lack of stable jobs.

These figures refer to imports of sea fish, consumption of which is rising continuously in the Czech Republic, with imports increasing accordingly.

Average yield per hectare is around 40 kg. Average annual consumption of freshwater fish is around 0.88 kg per inhabitant (excluding production for own consumption).

Table III.5.1. **Fish imports**<sup>1</sup>

	Tonnes	CZK	EUR
2003	31 180	1 432 966 503	44 988 359
2004	35 643	1 485 622 262	46 669 305
2005	38 746	1 821 969 940	54 643 160

1. Ornamental freshwater and sea fish are not included.

Table III.5.2. **Exports – carp (live)**

	Tonnes	CZK	EUR
2003	8 114	420 494 712	13 154 792
2004	11 668	420 106 444	13 341 844
2005	8 233	385 866 882	8 680 045

## Fisheries and the environment

Many of the ponds in the Czech Republic used for aquaculture are retention ponds and are strong enough to contain heavy runoff during floods. The large number of ponds makes it possible to conserve a variety of animal and plant species. Ponds have a positive impact on the level of groundwater and help purify surface water. They also play a very important role in shaping the landscape and are a source of recreational and leisure activities.

Carp production accounts for 87% of the total volume of commercial fish produced in the Czech Republic. The live carp market is closely associated with the Christmas and Easter holidays and the tradition of eating carp during these holiday periods continues. Carp production stands at 17 000 tonnes per year and is evenly divided between the domestic and foreign markets. The market for other types of freshwater fish is limited due to the economic constraints of fish farming.

Processing capacities are sufficient in the Czech Republic as most facilities do not process large quantities. Processing plants comply with EU provisions and requirements.

## Government financial transfers

Programmes that are compatible with EU legislation have been maintained and continue to receive subsidies, which must be used to support the sector (pond fish farming and breeding in the Czech Republic). The subsidies provided in this field are as follows:

- a) Support aimed at maintaining and improving the genetic potential of fish, including monitoring of fish yield (subsidy granted in 2005: CZK 4 565 744).
- b) Support aimed at conserving and promoting the genetic resources of fish (subsidy granted in 2005: CZK 4 272 000).
- c) Support for broader and easier access to information and key concepts from the scientific sphere and research (subsidy granted in 2005: CZK 124 000).
- d) Support for education programmes to improve conditions in organisations providing practical training for pupils (subsidy granted in 2005: CZK 1 094 494).
- e) Support for pond functions not related to fish production (such as flood prevention, environmental protection, aquacultural functions, recreation, protection of vegetation, game and birds); this support is granted as part of the general support provided to the Czech regions.

The main functions of the pond-based aquaculture industry are water storage through a system of dams, flood prevention in the region and improvement of water quality (subsidy granted in 2005: CZK 68 244 870).

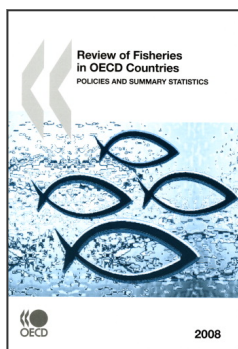
### **Information and labelling**

For freshwater fish products, two trademarks are registered in the Czech Republic: Český kapr (Czech Carp) and Třeboňská kapr (Třeboň Carp). These have been developed on the basis of the genetic identification of the provenance and origin of products. The Czech Ministry of Agriculture has established a "KLASA" national label of quality, indicating that certain Czech food products are certified as being of high quality. The KLASA label of quality has been granted to several Czech carp and Třeboň carp products. End consumers should have accurate information about the origin and quality of products, and this is one of the main purposes of product labelling under legislation in force in the Czech Republic.

Fish processing companies in the Czech Republic are currently dynamic and keep consumers informed. There are about 12. These companies currently process 4 500 tonnes of end products per year and are now functioning comfortably at 36% of capacity. Most of the companies have been renovated through the EU SAPARD or FIGP Programmes. Some of these companies also process imported sea fish. Some 2 600 people work in Czech fishery production (1.66% of employment in agriculture) and fisheries accounts for 0.00027% of GDP of the Czech Republic.

### **Outlook**

While the trade balance for freshwater fish is always positive, the overall trade balance irrespective of species is systematically negative. This is due to substantial imports of marine species, which are not produced on Czech fish farms. Most imports come in processed form. The bulk of exports are carp.



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