

## Romania, a very attractive place for Czech companies



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**W**e have a strategic partnership and we are important partners and allies in European Union(EU) and NATO. Czech Republic is a landlocked country in Central Europe and became a separate state in 1993 after the split of Czechoslovakia into two countries. The history of our contacts reaches far back into history. The first verifiable documents of mutual commercial relations come from the Middle Ages, when the Czech kings took active interest in events in the areas of what is today's Romania. Since the birth of the Czech Republic in 1993 our two countries have enjoyed a fruitful cooperation which extends to many areas.

Romania is a very important economic partner for Czechia. We have a long history of successful and dynamic economic cooperation. The bilateral relations are very intensive, particularly in the economic and cultural fields. The commercial links are the key drive, which increasing interest from business communities on both sides. Due to this strong collaboration, we have a rich record of some recent

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\* Vladimír Války assumed his duties as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to Romania in January 2015. A career diplomat in former Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic in Prague, after that in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic in Prague. At the headquarters he has been taking various positions, last time as a Director of the Inspection General and Internal Audit of the Ministry. He has worked in various junior and senior positions also at diplomatic and consular missions of the Czech Republic abroad. As a head of missions he worked as Consul General of the Czech Republic in São Paulo (Brazil) from 1998 to 2002, Director of the Pavilion of the Czech Republic at EXPO 2005 in Aichi (Japan) from 2005 to 2006, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Czech Republic to the Republic of Angola and the Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe based in Luanda from 2007 to 2010, Ambassador-Chargé d'Affaires of the Czech Republic to the Republic of Albania in Tirana from 2011 to 2012.



successful stories. Economically, there is a very positive trend in the bilateral relationship, because both the presence of Czech companies in Romania and also the volume of trade between our countries are rising. In 2015, the trade figures were as follows: exports reached 1,79 billions EUR and imports reached 1,53 billions EUR. The Czech Republic ranks 14th in the top 20 foreign investors in Romania.

The Czech investments in Romania are quite considerable, the biggest Czech investment in Romania represents government-owned energy company ČEZ, which has always been a good example of a responsible investor in Romania. Among other recent investors we can mention the Green Gate office building in Bucharest built by S-Group holding, Penta, Renomia or PPF. In general Czech business community appreciates Romania as a large internal market, with relatively low labour costs, low taxes, favorable geographical location as the gateway to the entire region of Balkans, Turkey, Asia, and North Africa. And what is very important that the number of our tourists is constantly increasing too. Unfortunately, the Romanian investments in our country are still of relatively small volume.

The potential for developing economic and trade relations between our countries presents a wide spectrum of intersect. The Czech Republic remains very important trade and investment partner also in next future. On local market in these days they are operating more than 800 Czech companies. Czech companies are present in a variety of sectors and, in general, can offer services and experience in infrastructure, public transport, railway, also in the field of sewage water and water treatment, agriculture, renewable energy, retail, food, pharma and health sector. As we have mentioned, our mutual economic and commercial relations like our production have in Romania a long tradition. Many Czech products are known there. As there are several tens of thousands of products made in the Czech Republic, the following selection can be nothing more than a brief list of the truly best-known, most important and most interesting products like Czech glass-making industry, branded porcelain, beer (Plzeňský Prazdroj and Pivovary Staropramen), herbal liqueur Becherovka, cars Škoda or Baťa's footwear.



Due to the strategic geographic location of Romania together with the possibility of finding qualified managers, many foreign companies have already established there their regional headquarters offices for the Balkan Peninsula and/or south-eastern European markets. Romania has also very beautiful landscapes, having numerous historical places and medieval towns. Therefore tourism from the Czech Republic is expected to develop there in the coming years.

Overall, last period may be described as a another great year for Romania's economy, with an increase of the gross domestic product (GDP) and a massive increase of exports. Romania is well on track to another year of GDP growth as it registers one of the best performances in the European Union. The fact that Romania is a member of European Union and that it has adapted its laws to the EU laws, respectively the fact that Romania now belongs to the community market, are highly important things for our investors. Czech companies are provided in Romania great perspectives for their business plans. Among decisive investment factors there are, how it was mentioned, especially well-qualified labour force. We admire the Romanian people for their resilience, ambition and competitiveness they showed over the years.

Recent positive developments in our bilateral trade relations help also CzechTrade Office in Bucharest and in 2007 was founded the Czech-Romanian Bilateral Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Prague. CzechTrade Office is operating under the auspices of the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Bucharest and offers its services to Czech and Romanian companies. The ultimate goal of the office is to concentrate on the B2B sector and promote further interactions between companies from both countries. The Embassy of the Czech Republic in Bucharest besides the excellent long term cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania, promotes its activities also with Czech Center in Bucharest, Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic in Timisoara, Embassy of Romania in Prague, Romanian clusters, industrial parks, and other institutions.