

SECTION
2

Reading for Understanding

▶ Key Ideas

BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

Independence brought political and economic changes and new challenges for Poland, Ukraine, and the Baltic States.

NOW YOU WILL LEARN

After decades of Communist rule, Hungary and the Czech Republic made economic and political reforms.

▶ Vocabulary

TERMS & NAMES

Magyar an ethnic Hungarian person or the Hungarian language

Czechoslovakia (CHEHK•uh•sluh•VAH•kee•uh) former country in Eastern Europe that existed from 1918 until 1993, when it split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia

Velvet Revolution the peaceful protest by the Czech people that led to the smooth end of communism in Czechoslovakia

BACKGROUND VOCABULARY

strategic relating to a plan of action designed to achieve a specific goal

standard of living an economic measure relating to the quality and amount of goods available to a group of people and how those goods are distributed across the group

eclectic made up of parts from a variety of sources



Visual Vocabulary Velvet Revolution

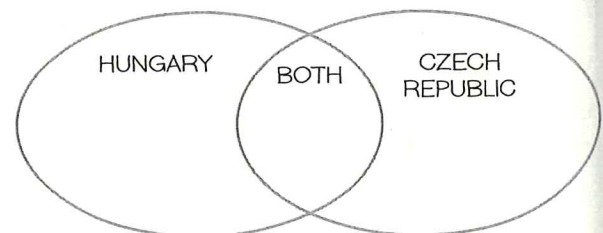
▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the Venn diagram shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the diagram to help you compare and contrast Hungary and the Czech Republic.



Skillbuilder Handbook, page R9

COMPARE AND CONTRAST



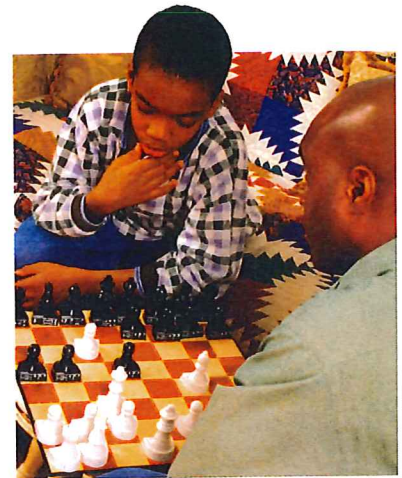
GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Go to Interactive Review @ ClassZone.com

Hungary and the Czech Republic

Connecting to Your World

Have you ever played chess or checkers? In these games, the player who controls the middle of the board can have a **strategic** advantage. That player can move in many different directions. Hungary sits right between the eastern and western regions of Europe and shares borders with seven other countries. It can choose which neighbors to befriend. Unlike good chess players, however, Hungary did not always have a choice about which way it moved.



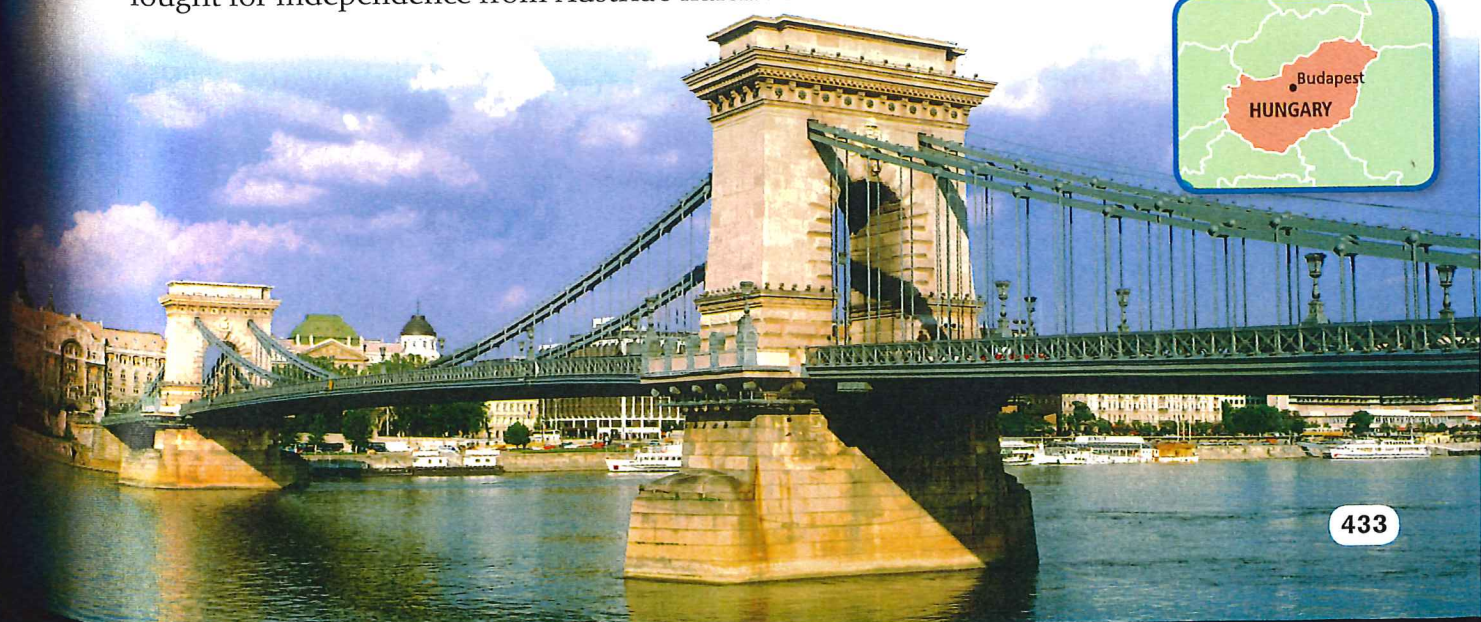
Playing Chess A boy learns to play chess from his father.

Hungary

KEY QUESTION How is Hungary's location an advantage in rebuilding its economy?

Hungary's central location attracted many groups. Hungary's earliest settlers were the **Magyar**, or ethnic Hungarian, people. In the late tenth century, Magyar leaders created a stable and prosperous kingdom. Then, in 1526, the Ottoman Turks and Austria conquered and divided Hungary's territory. Eventually, Austria drove out the Ottomans and took over. Hungary fought for independence from Austria's harsh rule.

Budapest The Széchenyi Chain Bridge was the first to cross the Danube River in Budapest.



Fun Facts!

PAPRIKA AND VITAMIN C

Paprika is a very popular spice in Hungarian food. It comes from a pepper that flavors food and also fights the common cold. When a cold starts, many people drink orange juice for extra vitamin C. In 1932, Hungarian scientist Albert Szent-Gyorgyi found that a paprika pepper contains five to six times more vitamin C than an orange.



Traditional and Modern

(left) Teenagers perform at a Hungarian folk dance.
(right) The crowd enjoys the show at the Sziget Music Festival in Budapest.



History By 1867, Austria had been weakened by many costly wars, and it was forced to share power with Hungary. Together they ruled an empire known as Austria-Hungary. During World War I, Austria-Hungary fought on the losing side. After its defeat, its territory was divided up. Hungary was independent but lost much of its land.

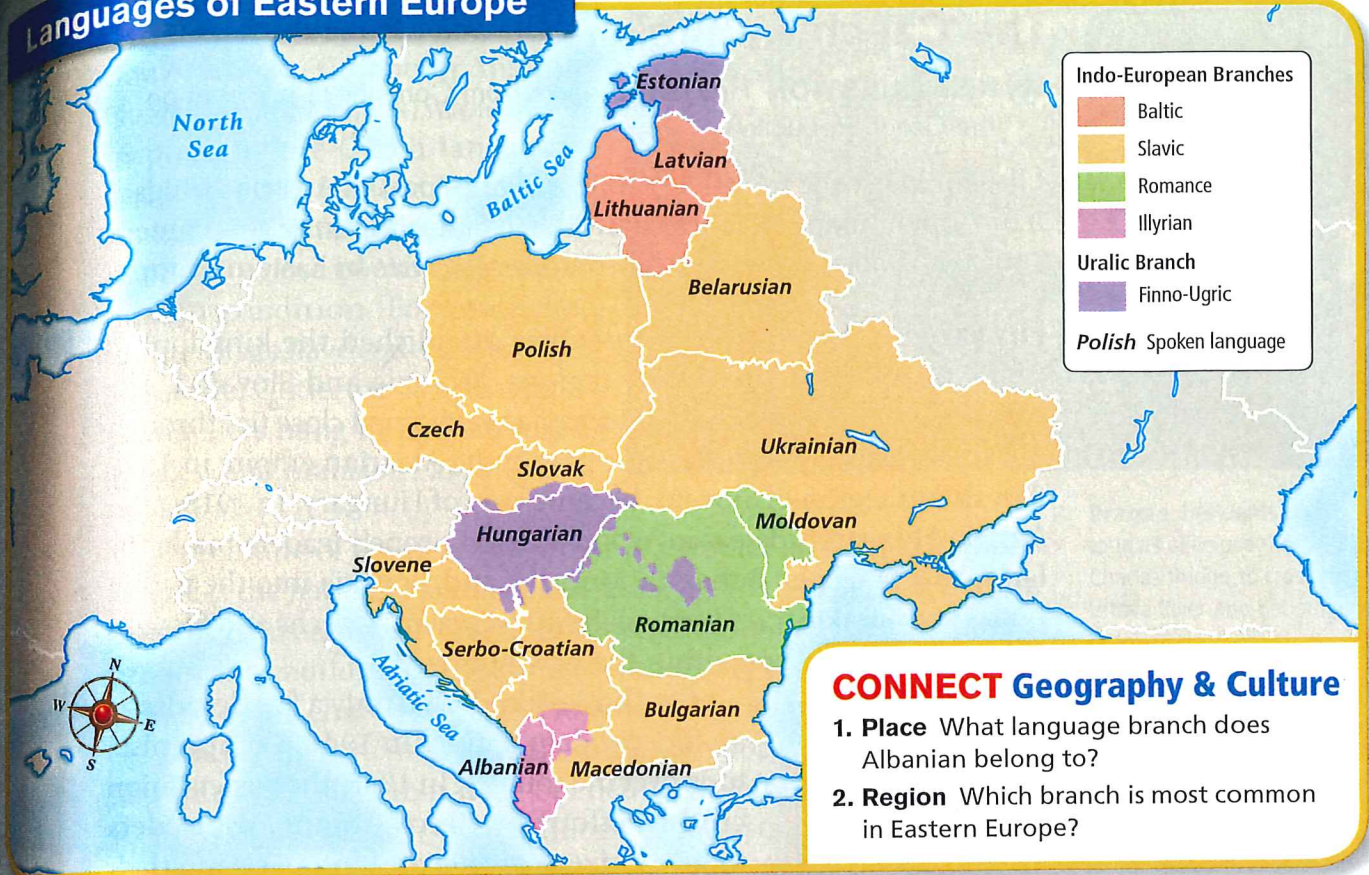
During World War II, Soviet troops invaded Hungary. They were followed by Communist Party agents, who wanted to make sure the Communists gained control of the government. Many Hungarians opposed Communist rule. They resented the loss of their freedom. In 1956, thousands of protesters flooded the streets of Budapest, the nation's capital, demanding that Soviet troops leave. The Soviet Union responded by sending more troops and tanks to crush the uprising. Thousands of protesters died in the fighting.

In later decades, Communist Party officials gave Hungarians greater economic freedom, allowing some private ownership of business. In 1989, as the Soviet government began to fall apart, the Hungarian government agreed to allow other political parties. A year later, Hungarian reformers removed the Communists from power in the country's first free elections.

Culture Most Hungarians are Magyars, descendants of Hungary's early settlers. Hungarians speak Hungarian, also called Magyar, a language related to Finnish and Estonian. As you can see from the map at right, Hungarian is different from the languages spoken in surrounding countries. About two-thirds of Hungarians are Roman Catholics. One-fourth are Protestants. Other ethnic groups include Croats, Roma (also called Gypsies), Romanians, and Slovaks.

During the Communist era, many Hungarians moved from farms to cities. Everyday life changed as a result. In cities today, modern influences like blue jeans and pop music clash with traditional dress and folk songs. Budapest is a good example of Hungary's mix of old and new. It is actually two cities divided by the Danube River. Medieval Buda sits on the western bank and Pest, which underwent a surge of development in the 18th century, sits on the eastern bank.

Languages of Eastern Europe



CONNECT Geography & Culture

- 1. Place** What language branch does Albanian belong to?
- 2. Region** Which branch is most common in Eastern Europe?

Government and Economics Hungary is a parliamentary democracy. Voters elect the members of parliament, called the National Assembly, to serve four-year terms. The National Assembly elects the president and the prime minister. The president—who serves a five-year term—is the commander in chief of the armed forces, but has little power. The prime minister is the head of government.

Before World War II, most Hungarians were farmers living in rural villages. Under Communist rule, officials worked hard to expand industry. As industry increased, many Hungarians moved to cities to work in government-run factories. By the 1990s, employment in agriculture decreased from over half to one-eighth of the population.

In the decades after the failed Hungarian revolt in 1956, the government began to allow some private businesses to operate. After the Communists lost the 1990 elections, Hungary's new leaders lifted many government controls on business and sold most remaining state-owned businesses and farms. The country moved rapidly toward a market economy. Today, it has one of the highest **standards of living** in Eastern Europe. Hungary joined the EU in 2004. The nation's central location and the Danube River help boost trade. EU members Germany, Austria, France, and Italy are its main trade partners.

FIND MAIN IDEAS Explain how Hungary's location is helpful in rebuilding its economy.



The Czech Republic

KEY QUESTION How did freedom from Communist rule change the Czech Republic?

Like Hungary, the Czech Republic was once part of Austria-Hungary. It also spent many decades controlled by a Communist government. Today, it is one of the most prosperous countries in Eastern Europe.

History In the 900s, Slavic peoples established the kingdom of Bohemia alongside two other regions, Moravia and Slovakia. The Czech regions of Bohemia and Moravia maintained close ties throughout their histories. Both became part of the Austrian empire in 1526. Slovakia, a region of Slovaks, became part of Hungary. In 1918, after Austria-Hungary's defeat in World War I, Europe's leaders made the lands that had been Bohemia, Moravia, and Slovakia into the nation of **Czechoslovakia** (CHEHK•uh•sluh•VAH•kee•uh). Czechs and Slovaks were thrown together within the new borders.

Czechoslovakia lasted only a few decades as an independent nation. In 1948, Communists took over the country. In 1968, the Soviet Union crushed efforts by Czech Communist leaders to give citizens greater freedom. Fearing their own people might demand more freedom, the Soviets sent troops and tanks to end protests.

In 1989, thousands of protesters filled the streets of Prague calling for an end to Communist rule. Massive protests convinced Communist leaders to resign. The end of Communist rule took place so smoothly, that this protest became known as the **Velvet Revolution**. In 1990, voters elected protest leader Václav Havel president. Three years later, Czech and Slovak leaders agreed to divide the country into the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Some call this friendly split the "Velvet Divorce."

Culture Most people in the Czech Republic are Czechs. They speak Czech, a Slavic language. The country has many smaller ethnic groups including Slovaks, Germans, Roma (Gypsies), Hungarians, and Poles. Before World War II, Czechoslovakia had a large Jewish population. Almost all the nation's Jews were killed during the Holocaust. Roman Catholics are the largest religious group in the Czech Republic.



HISTORY MAKERS

Václav Havel (born 1936)

Václav Havel's (VAHT-slahv HAH-vuhl) admirers call him a hero for his role in leading the Velvet Revolution. During Czechoslovakia's years of Communist rule, the country's leaders called him a danger to society. A well-known playwright, he spent several years in prison for openly opposing Communist rule. After the end of communism, grateful citizens chose Havel as Czechoslovakia's first president. He later served as the first president of the new Czech Republic.



ONLINE BIOGRAPHY

For more on the life of Václav Havel, go to the Research & Writing Center @ ClassZone.com

The Czech Republic has a tradition of fine art. Composer Antonin Dvorák (DVAWR•zhahk) wrote music inspired by the Czech landscape and folk music. Famous Czech writers include Franz Kafka and Milan Kundera, whose books explore the human condition. For centuries, Czech artists have crafted beautiful glassware. Glittering Czech crystal chandeliers hang in opera houses, palaces, and mansions around the world today.



Prague Residents and tourists alike use the Charles Bridge to cross the Vltava River and get around Prague.

The culture of the Czech Republic is a vibrant mix of old and new. Prague is the nation's capital and largest city. In the 1300s, it became a center of art and learning in Europe. The city has many beautiful Renaissance buildings. It is known as the "City of a Hundred Spires" because of the churches that dot its streets. Contemporary influences are making their marks on Prague. Young people dance to modern pop music in clubs that have opened in basements in the historic sections of town. Each year, millions of tourists add to the **eclectic** atmosphere of the Czech Republic.

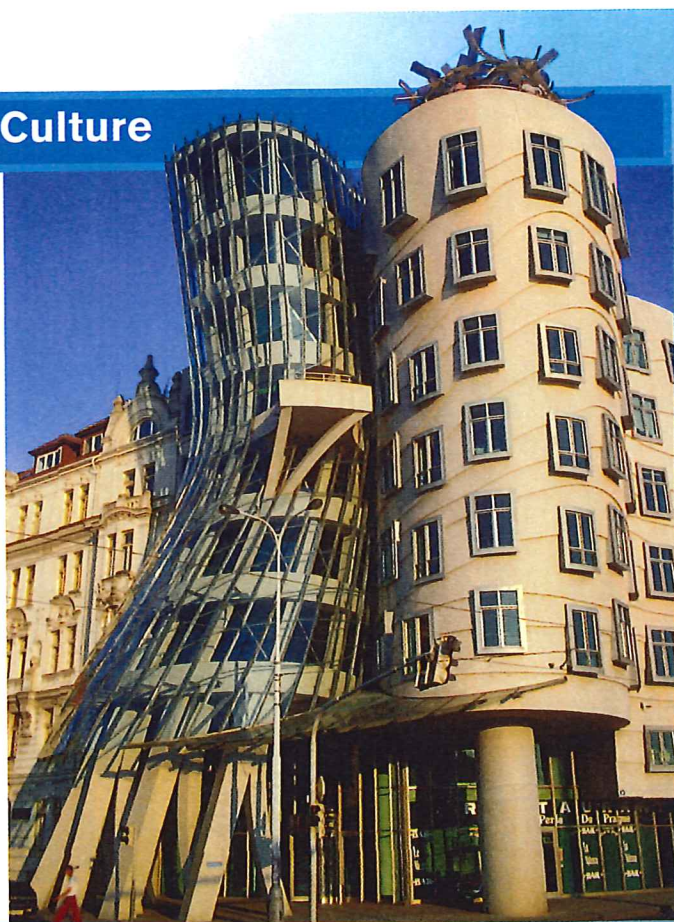
CONNECT Geography & Culture

The Dancing House Prague is known for its architecture. A popular stop on any tour of Prague is the Rasin Building, nicknamed the Dancing House. Although it is made of concrete, steel, and glass, it seems to swirl and twist, like a couple dancing.

Not everyone is a fan of the building, built by American architect Frank Gehry and Czech architect Vlado Milunic in 1996. Some feel it clashes with the older historic buildings that surround it. However, supporters find it lively and exciting, a symbol of the new Czech Republic.

CRITICAL THINKING

Make Inferences Why might some Prague residents want the city to build more new buildings like the Dancing House?



A Day in Radek's Life

To learn more about Radek and his world, go to the Activity Center @ ClassZone.com

Hello! My name is Radek. I am 14 years old and live in Brno in the southeastern part of the Czech Republic. With almost 400,000 people, it is the second largest city after Prague. We live in a small apartment. On weekends, I like to read, listen to music, or watch television. Sometimes my family takes the train to Prague. Here's my day.

To introduce himself, Radek says:

“Dobrý den. Jmenuju se Radek.”



7 A.M. My sister and I eat breakfast with our parents. They both have to go to work and we go to school. I have rye bread or a roll with butter and jam and a glass of milk. Sometimes we have slices of cheese or salami, too.



8 A.M.–4 P.M. I have to work hard at school, especially in my English class. Everyone has to take courses in at least one foreign language. My school has many after-school activities. I joined the gymnastics club. I'm looking forward to our first competition!



6 P.M. In the evening, my family eats dinner. Sometimes, my grandmother comes over and helps my mother make roast duck with *knedlíky*, or potato dumplings, and cabbage. It's one of my favorite meals.



7 P.M. Today is my name day. In the Czech Republic, each day of the year has a different name assigned to it. It's traditional to celebrate your birthday and your name day. Some of my friends and I are going out for ice cream sundaes to celebrate.



CONNECT to Your Life

Journal Entry Think about your own birthday. How do you celebrate it? Do you have other special occasions, like Radek, that you celebrate with your family? Record your ideas in your journal.

Government and Economics The Czech Republic is a parliamentary democracy. Voters elect members of parliament. The parliament elects the president, who serves as the head of state. The president appoints a prime minister to oversee the daily operations of government.

Before Communist rule, the Czech economy was diverse and balanced. Under communism, however, the government shifted the economy toward heavy industry. After Communist control ended, the country's new leaders had to regain the balance that it once had. This has led to some unemployment as factory jobs decline.

On the whole, however, the Czech Republic's transition from a command to a market economy has been a smooth one. Most farms and factories have been sold to private owners. The Czech Republic joined the EU in 2004. Foreign investment and exports of Czech products, especially to Germany, have helped the economy continue growing. It has been among the most successful economies of the former Communist nations in Eastern Europe.



Škoda Auto This Czech company has been manufacturing cars for over 100 years. When Communist rule ended, the industry privatized and Volkswagen took over the company.

SUMMARIZE Explain how the Czech Republic changed after gaining freedom from Communist rule.

Section 2 Assessment

ONLINE QUIZ
For test practice, go to
Interactive Review
@ClassZone.com

TERMS & NAMES

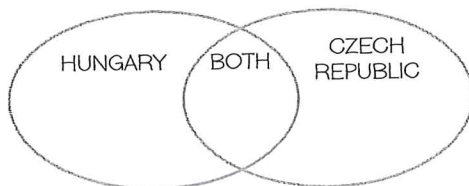
1. Explain the importance of

- Magyar
- Czechoslovakia
- Velvet Revolution

USE YOUR READING NOTES

2. Compare and Contrast Use your completed chart to answer the following question:

How did Hungary's fight for independence differ from the Czech Republic's and how were they similar?



KEY IDEAS

3. What ethnic group do many Hungarians belong to?
4. How was Czechoslovakia formed?
5. How did the Velvet Revolution change Czechoslovakia?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Analyze Causes and Effects** How do you think the failure of the 1956 Hungarian revolt affected other Eastern European nations?
7. **Find Main Ideas** How did Václav Havel influence Czechoslovakia?
8. **CONNECT to Today** Why do you think the Czech Republic recently built new expressways and rail links to Germany?
9. **WRITING Express an Opinion** The young people who led the Hungarian revolt in 1956 were called freedom fighters by some and lawbreakers and traitors by others. Write a paragraph telling how you think they should be remembered.