

## The Slovak Republic

The **Slovak Republic** is a landlocked state in Central Europe. It has a population of over five million and an area of about 49,000 square kilometres. Slovakia is bordered / surrounded by the Czech Republic and Austria to the west, Poland to the north, Ukraine to the east and Hungary to the south.

The largest city is the capital, Bratislava, and the second largest is Košice.

The official language is Slovak, a member of the Slavic language family.

## The Rivers

The **Danube** (2 872 km, out of which 172 km in Slovakia) is a river in Central Europe, the continent's second longest after the Volga. It originates in the Black Forest of Germany at the confluence of the rivers Brigach and Breg. The Danube then flows southeast for 2,872 km passing through Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, and Romania and empties into the Black Sea.



The **Váh** (403 km) is the longest river in Slovakia. It is a left tributary of the Danube river. It flows over northern and western Slovakia and finally feeds into the Danube near Komárno.

## The Natural Environment

Slovakia is a country with mountainous regions in the north and flat terrain in the south.

The Carpathian Mountains extends across most of the northern half of the country. The High Tatras, a popular skiing destination with many scenic tarns and valleys as well as the highest point / peak in Slovakia, the Gerlachovský štít 2,655 m, are the highest mountains. The other important mountains are The Low Tatras and The Slovak Paradise. There are many limestone and ice caves, mineral and thermal springs and spas, deep deciduous and evergreen forests.



Extensive lowlands - Záhorská nížina, Poddunajská nížina and Východoslovenská nížina - form the southern part of Slovakia. Southern and eastern lowlands are the main agricultural areas.



## The Castles

Slovakia contains a lot of medieval castles, most of which are in ruins. The best known castles include Bojnice Castle, Spiš Castle (the largest fortified castle in Europe), Orava Castle, Bratislava Castle, and the ruins of Devín Castle. Čachtice Castle used to be home of the world's most prolific female serial killer, the 'Bloody Lady', Elizabeth Báthory.

Almost 2 million people visit Slovakia every year, and the most attractive destinations are the capital of Bratislava and the High Tatras

