



Otázka: Geography of the USA

Jazyk: Angličtina

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General info

- the United States of America → commonly referred to as the United States, America or simply the States

= federal republic consisting of 50 states and a federal district

- the 48 contiguous states + the federal district Washington D.C. create the main part of the state - they are located in central North America between Canada and Mexico (the only neighbors)

- the state of Alaska is situated to the northwest of Canada

- apart from these continental areas, the state of Hawaii and a few territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean belong to the USA as well

- the capital: Washington, District of Columbia (located on land donated by the state of Maryland) x the largest city is New York

- at almost 10 mil km² → the 4th largest country in the world

- about 320 mil people = the 3rd largest country by population

- one of the world's most ethnically and cultural diverse country



- the US also has overseas territories with varying levels of independence and organization

Hydrography

- washed by the Atlantic Ocean in the east, Pacific Ocean in the west
- Alaska borders the Pacific to the S, the Bering Strait to the W, and the Arctic Ocean to the N, while Hawaii lies far to the SW of the mainland in the Pacific Ocean
- the rivers in the USA flow into the Atlantic, into the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico
- the most important river: Mississippi (flows into Gulf of Mexico – industrial significance)
- other significant rivers: the Missouri, the Rio Grande, the Snake, the Columbia and the Colorado
- *the Great Lakes* = the 5 most famous lakes
- situated in the NE on the border with Canada
- they contain about a half of the world's fresh water
- Lake Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie and Lake Ontario
- other lakes situated completely in the USA: Okeechobee, Great Salt Lake (considerably smaller than the GL)

Landscape

- 2 important mountain regions: the Appalachian Mountains in the NE, the large range the Cordilleras in the W
- *the Cordilleras* – very long → they extend from the northern North America far to the south



- divided into several ranges (the Rocky Mountains, the Sierra Nevada, the Cascades the Costal Range)
- the highest peak: Mt. McKinley (Alaska), the 2nd Mt. Whitney

Climate

- a broad range of climates, varying from the tropical rain-forest of Hawaii and the tropical savanna of S Florida to the subarctic and tundra climates of Alaska
- mild belt in the north (colder than in Europe)
- generally, the W and S parts of the US have warmer weather compared to the E and N parts: extremely hot summers and comparatively tolerable winters (Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma)
- the eastern/northern parts of the US experience harsh winters with heavy snowfall but the summers are pleasant (Ohio, Pennsylvania)
- the hottest place, the lowest latitude: Death Valley
- lack of rain in the interior country

Economy

- a capitalist mixed economy based on abundant natural resources and high productivity
- the largest importer of goods and second largest exporter (top trading partners: Canada, China, Mexico, Japan and Germany)
- leader in science, technology
- the largest import commodity: oil; export: transportation equipment
- the most important stock exchange: The New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street

- the global recession between 2008 and 2012 had an significant impact on the US → brought high unemployment, decline of values, inflation and rising prices of petroleum and food

Industry and agriculture

- *industry* - chemical products are the leading manufacturing field - 3rd largest producer of oil
 - energy is produced especially in electrical and nuclear power stations
 - rich in natural resources (lead, zinc, coal; copper, platinum and gold in Alaska; oil and gas in the south of Texas)
 - as to the food industry: companies based or founded in the USA which belong to the most recognized ones in the world (Subway, McDonalds, Coca-Cola)
 - *agriculture* - significant for the economy **x** less than 2% of people
 - concentrated in the Great Plains (interior)
- focused on growing various kinds of crops (corn, soybeans, peanuts, oats, wheat, rice, barley, cotton or oilseeds)
- livestock is bred there - large producer of beef, pork, poultry and dairy products

Places of interests

- thanks to its great area and natural variety this country offers a great number of various places of interest
- **Grand Canyon** - in northern Arizona
- carved over several million years by the Colorado River
- not the deepest or the longest canyon in the world but the overwhelming size + colorful



landscape offers visitors a spectacular experience

- **Yellowstone NP** - the world's first national park
 - to preserve the vast number of geysers, hot springs, and other thermal areas
 - as well as to protect the incredible wildlife, black bears, grizzly bears, deer, elk, bison
- **the Golden Gate Bridge** = bridge spanning the strait called Golden Gate between San Francisco and Marin County
 - symbol of San Francisco and California
 - the famous red-orange color was specifically chosen to make the bridge more easily visible through the thick fog that frequently shrouds the bridge
- **Niagara Falls** - between the state of New York and the province of Ontario
 - with more than 14 million visitors each year it is one of the most visited tourist attraction in the world
- **the Florida Keys** = a 120 mile long chain of tropical islands curving around the base of the Florida peninsula
 - connected to the mainland by a series of bridges
- **Kilauea** - a currently active shield volcano in the Hawaiian Islands
 - the most active of the five volcanoes that together form the island of Hawaii