

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION

Administrative breakdown

Prague is a statutory town. The Capital City of Prague is administered by the Prague City Assembly. Prague is divided into 22 administrative districts for the execution of the state administration. From the point of view of the self-government, it consists of 57 city sections with own elected bodies.

Development of the territory

In the second half of the 9th century, Prague Castle was founded. Under its protection, independent settlements developed in the surrounding area. These settlements grew to constitute independent towns of Prague: Staré Město (the Old Town), Nové Město (the New Town), Malá Strana (the Lesser or Little Quarter), and Hradčany (the "Castle District"). In 1784, the four territories (still independent towns) were joined into the town of Prague. Other four towns were gradually attached in 1850, 1883, 1884, and 1901 (Josefov, Vyšehrad, Holešovice-Bubny, and Libeň, respectively). The Act of 6 February 1920 established the Great Prague (38 nearby municipalities were joined). Further territorial growth took place gradually in 1960, 1968 (attachment of 21 municipalities of the Středočeský Region), and 1970. The last spatial growth of Prague took place in 1974 (30 municipalities of the Středočeský Region were attached).

Population

Prague's population (recalculated for the current territory) increased 4.8 times from the first census (in 1869 – 270 389 inhabitants) to the 2021 Census (1 301 432 population). From 2011 onwards, Prague's population was increasing every year (except for 2013 and 2021). Prague had 1 384 732 inhabitants as at 31 December 2023. Prague's population is growing now thanks to natural population change and migration. However, from 1993, there was a decrease in its population every year (due to both – low immigration and a negative natural population change). It stopped in 2002 when population started to grow again thanks to higher migration. In 2006, it was for the first time after 1975 when the number of births was higher than the number of deaths and since then Prague has been reporting a positive natural population change.

A high migration volume is characteristic for the migration situation in Prague. Usually, it is mainly caused by frequent labour mobility of foreign nationals with persons in productive age prevailing among them. In 2022, a migration wave from Ukraine affected by the war changed the situation. Those coming from Ukraine were mainly working age females with children. Prague had the highest positive net migration in 2022 when it gained by migration 60.7 persons per 1 000 mid-year population. The figure significantly surpassed the previous record set in 2007 (19.2 persons gained through migration per 1 000 population).

The age structure of the population is changing. Children have a 16% proportion, people in productive age make 66%, and people aged 65+ make 19% of the population. A higher number of people aged 65+ than children was recorded for the first time already in 1995. Both females and males live to the longest age there of all Regions. In 2023, the female life expectancy at birth there was 84.16 years and the male one was 78.53 years.

Economy

Prague makes constantly about a quarter of the national gross domestic product (GDP). The value of GDP for Prague in 2022 was in real terms by 2.3% higher compared to 2021. In 2022, the gross domestic product per capita reached CZK 1 453 579. This is 2.3 times higher than the figure for the Czech Republic (CR). A higher level of GDP formation is typical for metropolises. It is influenced by many factors as follows: a lot of workers not living in Prague work in Prague and thus generate value added there, businesses have their seats located and registered in Prague, branches (subsidiaries) of multinational companies are located there, and central bodies of the public and private sectors are concentrated in the capital. However, Prague exceeds the national average much less as for the net disposable income of households, which is the amount that a household can use for savings or consumption (it is by 29.5% higher than the Czech Republic's average per capita).

Prague is an economy oriented on services. Services have been making over 80% of the value added in Prague already since 2000. In 2022, it was 83.5% of the value added in Prague (the figure for the Czech Republic was 65.3%). Most of employed persons are working in the service sector as well (83.6% of the employed in Prague in 2022).

Construction

In 2009, construction was affected by a crisis. The value of construction work according to delivery contracts in Prague was gradually decreasing from 2010 and it wasn't until 2014 when an upturn occurred and the value began to grow again. In 2023, construction work with the value of CZK 91.5 billion was realised in Prague.

Due to the economic crisis, the number of dwellings started decreased the most, namely by 50%, year-on-year, already in 2010. The number of dwellings completed decreased the most in the subsequent year 2011 (by 43%). The upturn came in 2015. In 2015–2020, the number of dwellings started ranged from 2.7 to 6.5 thousand dwellings per year and the number of dwellings completed varied from 5.2 to 6.1 thousand dwellings per year. In 2023, construction of 5 720 dwellings started, which resulted in a year-on-year decrease in the number of started dwellings by 12%. 6 410 dwellings were completed, i.e. by 2.5% less than in 2022. A large part of the dwellings is still under construction. The housing construction takes place more often in the Středočeský Region, especially in the surroundings of Prague.

Labour market

Prague is the largest regional labour market in the Czech Republic. It is characteristic for the up-to-now development that Prague is a very attractive locality in terms of the labour market and it is able to cover an increased demand. Prague's labour market was able to absorb almost all labour force released in the process of transformation. Job vacancies in the Capital City of Prague are also opportunities for the population from wide surroundings, population of the whole Czech Republic, and foreigners, too.

Labour force in the Capital City of Prague (the Hl. m. Praha Region) consisted of 686.6 thousand persons in total in 2023. It has significantly higher professional skills compared to other Regions. Already 53% of the employed are persons with higher education (nationwide, it is 27%). Wages in Prague are above-average, too. In 2023, the average gross monthly wage in Prague (full-time equivalent) was CZK 53 507 according to preliminary data, while the Czech Republic's average was CZK 43 120.

Prague has the lowest unemployment rate of all Regions of the CR for a long time. The lowest unemployment rate was reached both in Prague and the whole Czech Republic in 2007. Afterwards, due to a recession, there was an increase in the unemployment and from 2013 to 2019 there was a decrease again. In 2019, the unemployment rate reached a historic low. At the end of 2020, the percentage of unemployed persons increased to 3.51% due to the coronavirus crisis; during 2021, it decreased to 2.76% and the figure in 2023 was similar (2.80%). The number of available job applicants according to labour offices' statistics almost doubled in 2020 compared to 2019; it increased to 30 230 job applicants. In 2021, it decreased by 21%, year-on-year. The y-o-y decrease in 2023 was 1.7%. At the same time, the number of job vacancies increased compared to 2022 (by 4.6% to 79 569).

Tourism

Tourism is an important part of the capital's economy. However, in 2020 and 2021, it was significantly reduced due to the coronavirus pandemic. In 2022, the situation has got back to normal to a considerable extent and almost 6 million guests accommodated in Prague's collective accommodation establishments. In 2023, the increase continued up to 7.4 million persons. A majority of Prague's visitors consists permanently of tourists from abroad (79% of all accommodated guests in 2023). Among guests from abroad, Germans are prevailing as usual. Guests from the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were the second and the third largest group, respectively. The number of overnight stays reached 16.9 million. Compared to 2022, guests in Prague made by 26% more overnight stays. The following had the largest share in the total number of overnight stays of non-residents in Prague: Germans, guests from the United States of America, and from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In 2023, there were 844 collective accommodation establishments in Prague. The total number of beds in these establishments was 96 257. Over a half of beds in Prague's accommodation establishments is in hotels of highest categories. The average length of stay of one visitor has been decreasing for a long-term; in 2023, it was 3.3 days. According to the 2022 Tourism Satellite Account data, the share of tourism in the gross value added was 2.7% and its share in employment was 5.9%.

Education and health

School establishments in Prague, universities in particular, not only serve the population of Prague, but also people from other Regions of the Czech Republic. Numbers of pupils at different levels of schools are influenced by previous demographic trends. Prague has the highest number of grammar schools and secondary technical schools of all the Regions. Prague's secondary schools represented in the 2023/2024 school year approximately 14.8% of all secondary schools in the Czech Republic (193 secondary schools with 72.4 thousand students in full-time studies (excluding conservatoires; including schools established by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Defence)). As for higher education, Prague's position is absolutely unique. There were 26 universities in Prague, at which almost 122 thousand students were studying in all types of studies. It is 40% of all university students in the Czech Republic.

Also health establishments are concentrated in the territory of the capital. They are mainly specialised and often also research establishments, which, however, serve patients from all over the Czech Republic. One fifth of all physicians working in the CR is permanently employed there. There were 30 hospitals with 8.9 thousand

beds in total in Prague in 2023. As for the health sector, relative indicators per 1 000 population are permanently the highest in Prague of all Regions of the Czech Republic.

Transport

Prague is the central point of transport links both for the surrounding Středočeský Region and the territory of the CR as a whole (commuting to work, schools, for shopping, culture, or to health establishments). For the city not to be burdened by transit transport, so-called Pražský okruh (Prague Ring Road) is under construction; it is to lead the transit transport out of the capital's inhabited areas. A half of the Prague Ring Road is in operation for the time being.

Prague has the highest number of registered passenger cars of all Regions of the CR (759 passenger cars per 1 000 population) and the number is permanently growing. Prague has a well-functioning public transport network. Its backbone underground system (metro) is 65 kilometres long and a network of tram railways is 148 kilometres long. In 2023, 962.5 million passengers used the public transport, which was by 8% more than a year before and by 18% less than in 2019. The highest number of passengers use the underground (37.5%), trams (36.3%), and buses (25.7%).

Prague is also an important international railway node. Prague Main Station underwent a total reconstruction in 2011. Both rail and bus lines are included in the Prague Integrated Transport System (PID). The number of PID lines is constantly expanding not only to the Středočeský Region, but also to other adjacent Regions of the Czech Republic.

Air transport of passengers as well as freight is provided particularly by an international airport called Václav Havel Airport Prague (previously called Praha-Ruzyně). In 2023, 13.8 million travellers were checked in there, which was by 29% more than in 2022. In 2023, 69 airlines in total were flying from Prague to 167 destinations on both regular and irregular flights.

The environment

Prague belongs to the most affected Regions of the Czech Republic as for its air quality. The air quality in Prague is influenced the most by traffic, electricity and heat generation, and construction work emissions. Transport accounted for 87.5% of total emissions of particulate matter and 70.4% of total nitrogen oxides emissions in 2020. Specific emissions of nitrogen oxides and of carbon monoxide per area unit from transport in Prague are over 10 times higher compared to the national average. Car traffic is also the main source of noise, which is one of Prague's major problems.

City sections of Prague

City sections of Prague are very heterogeneous self-governing units. There are city sections, which have a distinct character of an urban centre (Praha 1) or, on the contrary, suburban areas (Praha-Benice). They differ in the level of urbanisation, population density, quality of technical infrastructure, and socio-economic structure of the population. As for the population size, these city sections differ very much, too. While four city sections exceed 100 000 population (Prague 4, Prague 6, Prague 8, and Prague 10), nine city sections have less than 2 000 population, of which two have less than 500 population (Praha-Nedvězí and Praha-Královice).