

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION

The Pardubický Region is located in the eastern part of Bohemia; however, it includes also a northwestern part of the historical territory of Moravia. The position of the Region is further determined by the neighbouring Regions: the Středočeský Region, the Královéhradecký Region, the Olomoucký Region, the Jihomoravský Region, and the Vysočina Region. The Královéhradecký Region, the Liberecký Region, and the Pardubický Region form together the NUTS 2 cohesion region – Severovýchod. A part of the northeast border of the Region is also the national border between the Czech Republic (CR) and Poland. The borders of the Region are further formed by southern parts of Orlické hory (the Eagle Mountains) and westernmost parts of the Hrubý Jeseník Mountain Range. The highland parts of Železné hory (the Iron Mountains) together with Žďárské vrchy (the Žďár Hills) line the south and southeast, respectively, while the fertile Labe lowland is situated in the central and western parts. Orlické hory, Žďárské vrchy, and Železné hory are protected landscape areas of the Region.

The area of 4 519 square kilometres (5.7% of the CR's area) ranks the Region the fifth smallest among the Regions of the CR. The agricultural land makes 59.6% of the total area of the Region, while the arable land makes 42.4%. The forest land covers 29.9% of the Region's area. The highest point of the Region is the Králický Sněžník Mount (altitude 1 424 m), which is part of the third highest mountain range in the Czech Republic (named also Králický Sněžník). The central and the top part of the Králický Sněžník Mountain Range, involving remains of the original vegetation and a high moor, has been declared a national nature reserve. The lowest point of the Region is the surface of the Labe River close to Kojice (altitude 201 m) near the western border of the Region.

There is a great diversity in natural conditions in the Pardubický Region; also settlement and industrial and agricultural activities are unevenly distributed and therefore quality of the **environment** varies, too. The foothill and upland areas (lacking any rather large settlement) of central and northern parts of the Ústí nad Orlicí District and southern parts of the Chrudim District suffer from the impact of human activities in the least degree. The highest degree of that impact is seen in the area of concentrated industrial activities, settlement, and traffic junctions. In the area around the city of Pardubice, the environmental damage resulting particularly from chemical and power industry (the Paramo and Synthesia chemical works, the Opatovice power plant and the Chvaletice power plant) is one of the heaviest within the whole Czech Republic.

Regarding **water management**, the Pardubický Region is an exceptionally important area with excessive water supplies (the significance of which reaches beyond the regional level) of ground water as well as surface water drawn from watercourses. It is an area of the heads of streams and thus there is no inflow pollution from other catchment areas. A rather low degree of wastewater pollution is seen in middle and upper parts of watercourses, except for the Chrudimka River between the town of Chrudim and the city of Pardubice and for the upper course of the Svitava River. Three largest bodies of water in the Region are as follows: the Seč Reservoir (on the Chrudimka River), the Bohdaneč Pond (on the Opatovice River Channel), and the Pastviny Dam (on the Divoká Orlice River). Some parts of the Region are under large-scale protection measures, i.e. they involve water protection zones or natural water accumulation protected areas. The groundwater reservoirs are connected particularly with the Ústí nad Orlicí and the Vysoké Mýto syncline of the Czech Cretaceous Basin (the Ústí nad Orlicí District and the Svitavy District) and with the Labe Quaternary sediments (the Pardubice District).

The Pardubický Region comprises four **Districts** (the Chrudim District, the Pardubice District, the Svitavy District, and the Ústí nad Orlicí District); it had 451 municipalities as at 31 December 2023 (it is the sixth highest number of municipalities among the 14 Regions of the Czech Republic). The average cadastral area of a municipality (10.0 square kilometres) is the third smallest in the CR; the average population (1 176 population per municipality) ranks the Region the third lowest in the CR. Of the Region's population, 13.4% live in municipalities under 500 population. The percentage of population living in municipalities of 500 – 1 999 population now makes 25.2%. The percentage of population living in municipalities of 2 000 – 9 999 population is 24.8% in the Region. The percentage of population living in municipalities of over 10 000 population made 36.6% as at 31 December 2023. In the Region's capital Pardubice, 17.4% of the population of the Region live. There are 38 towns in the Pardubický Region, in which 60.9% of the Region's population live. The following ones rank among the most populated: the city of Pardubice, the town of Chrudim, and the town of Svitavy.

The Region's **population** was 530 560 as at 31 December 2023, which is 4.9% of the CR's total population. The Pardubice District is the most populated of the Region, followed by the Ústí nad Orlicí District, the Chrudim District, and the Svitavy District. The population increased in 2023 thanks to the positive balance of international migration. Second year in a row the number of people in the age group of 15–64 years in the Region has increased, year-on-year, accounting for 63.0% of the Region's population at the end of 2023. The share of children aged 0–14 years in the Region's population decreased year-on-year after a long time, by the end of 2023 it reached the level of 2019 (15.9%). There is a long-term increasing trend in the number of people aged 65+ years; they account for 21.0% of the Region's population. The ageing index (the ratio of the

population aged 65+ years to the population under the age of 15), was 131.9 in 2023 (compared to 128.5 in the previous year).

The 2023 average registered **number of employees** was 181.2 thousand full-time equivalent (FTE) persons. The **average gross monthly wage** of FTE employees with a workplace in the Pardubický Region amounted to CZK 38 422 in 2023; it makes 89.1% of the national average (it is the second lowest wage after the Karlovarský Region).

The share of the **unemployed persons** (the share of available job applicants aged 15–64 years in the whole population of the same age) was 3.10% as at 31 December 2023 (the fifth lowest among the Regions of the Czech Republic); it was by 0.24 percentage point higher than in 2022. The highest unemployment rate is reported in the Svitavy District (3.71%), the lowest in the Ústí nad Orlicí District (2.80%). The number of job applicants amounted to 11 038 persons and made 4.0% of the unemployed of the CR. The number of available job applicants was 10 325 as at 31 December 2023. Among registered job applicants in the Region, 15.2% are in the age group under 25 years. Females make more than half (52.6%) of the unemployed in the Region; people with disabilities make 15.4% of the total number of the unemployed. Regarding educational attainment, most of the job applicants are observed among persons with secondary vocational education without A-level examination (36.3%) and primary education (24.6%). On average, there was 1.24 job vacancy kept in the labour office register per 1 job applicant kept in the labour office register in the Region; regarding work positions for people with disabilities, there were 3.6 job applicants per 1 vacancy.

In 2023, the **gross domestic product** (GDP) per capita was 81.7% of the national average (by 0.6 percentage point more than in 2022). In the Region, services significantly contribute to the GDP formation, comprising 56.1% of the Region's gross value added. The industry also plays a vital part; its share in the gross value added of the Region in 2023 was 34.6%. The share of construction amounted to 6.2% of the GVA.

One of fundamental impacts of the disadvantageous economic development in the Region during the past years was a decline of **housing construction** in 2013–2015. In the following period, in accordance with the national trend, there was revival started and completed housing construction. In 2022, there was the second highest number of completed dwellings (flats) per 1 000 population in the Pardubický Region for the last ten years, and in 2023 even the highest. In comparison with the previous year, the number of started dwellings was by 9.5% dwellings lower in the Region in 2023. The total number of completed dwellings increased by 5.0% in the Region compared to 2022 and the number of completed dwellings per 1 000 population was the fifth highest among the Regions in 2023. The highest number of dwellings within the Region was completed in the Pardubice District (830 dwellings); the lowest number of completed dwellings was in the Ústí nad Orlicí District (319 dwellings).

A favourable position of the Pardubický Region in terms of **transport** is beneficial for its further development. The Region has 581 kilometres of railway tracks; the most important rail nodes are in the city of Pardubice and in the town of Česká Třebová that are part of an international arterial railway connecting Berlin, Prague, Brno, and Vienna. In Pardubice, tracks of national relevance link to the main track, providing the connection to Liberec, and to Havlíčkův Brod via Chrudim and Hlinsko. The current road network (without motorways) has 3 586 kilometres in total, class I roads measure 456 kilometres, and class II roads 930 kilometres. The most important transit flow goes through the Region via the road No I/35 leading from the southeast to the northwest via the towns of Moravská Třebová, Svitavy, Litomyšl, Vysoké Mýto, and Holice towards the city of Hradec Králové. The road No I/37 from the north via Pardubice and Chrudim towards Ždírec nad Doubravou is also important. In Chrudim, it intersects with the road No I/17 leading from Čáslav, via Heřmanův Městec, Hrochův Týnec to Zámrsk. There are 9.2 kilometres of the D 11 motorway and 32.2 kilometres of the class II D 35 motorway in the territory of the Region. As for the air transport, an international airport in Pardubice plays a key role with its military and civil air traffic. In terms of water (river) transport, only a short navigable part of the Labe River to Chvaletice is in use; opening of a waterway to the regional capital of Pardubice has been postponed. One of interesting seasonal tourist attractions is a passenger water (river) transport on the Labe River on the route Kunětice – Pardubice – Srnojedy.

Regarding **education**, there were 322 nursery schools in the Pardubický Region in 2023 with 18 266 children enrolled in 832 classes. Other educational establishments in the Region comprise: 253 basic schools with 49 197 pupils, 20 grammar schools with 6 047 pupils, 62 secondary schools (including secondary vocational schools) with 17 724 pupils in full-time studies (excluding follow-up courses), and 6 higher professional schools with 568 students in full-time studies. University education in the Region is provided by the University of Pardubice comprising seven faculties. The number of students exceeded ten thousand in the 2009/2010 school year. In 2012, the number of students stopped growing and it decreased below 7 thousand in 2018.

According to data from the **health sector**, in 2023, a total of 950 independent surgeries of physicians were active in the Pardubický Region, of which 208 belonged to general practitioners for adults, 85 to general practitioners for children and adolescents, 217 to dentists, 56 to gynaecologists, and 377 to specialists

(specialist physicians). In total, there were 2 167 physicians working in the territory of the Region across state and non-state health establishments (expressed as full-time equivalent employees), with an average of 245 inhabitants of the Region per physician (the third highest value in the inter-regional comparison). Outside hospitals, a total of 133 pharmacies operated in the Pardubický Region.

The Pardubický Region has a great potential for the development of **tourism**. One can find there lowlands as well as mountainous landscape, agreeable climate as well as many places suitable for swimming, doing water sports, hiking, cycling tourism, and winter sports. Especially the following areas are attractive for tourists: northern and eastern part of the Ústí nad Orlicí District – foothills of the Orlické hory Mountains, mainly resorts of Buková hora and Dolní Morava. In the Chrudim District, mainly in its southern and southwestern part, there are also many tourist centres of which the most visited are the following ones: the area around the Seč Dam, areas at Horní Bradlo, Bojanov, and Křižanovice in the Železné hory Mountains. Partly in the Ústí nad Orlicí District and in the Svitavy District there is a favourite tourist spot of Toulouvcovy maštale (a system of sandstone formations and narrow valleys). In 2023, there were 377 collective tourist accommodation establishments with 20 272 beds in the Pardubický Region providing service to 535 thousand guests (highest number for the last ten years) with the average number of overnight stays amounting to 2.6. The number of collective accommodation establishments, beds in them, and the number of guests in the Pardubický Region belong for a long-term to the lowest ones when comparing them with those in other Regions of the Czech Republic.

**Cultural** establishments and activities in the Region are concentrated mostly in towns. Among the most important ones in the Chrudim District, we can mention Muzeum loutkářských kultur (the Puppet Museum) and Muzeum barokních soch (the Museum of Baroque Statues) in the town of Chrudim, the State chateau in Slatiňany with its Hippology museum, the Open-Air Museum Vysočina – museum of folk architecture in Veselý Kopec and adjacent localities of an area around the town of Hlinsko. In the Pardubice District, visitors are attracted especially by the Castle of Pardubice, where one can see exhibits of Východočeské muzeum (the Museum of East Bohemia) and Východočeská galerie (the Gallery of East Bohemia). Interesting for them is also a late Gothic castle on the Mount Kunětická, the Baroque Chateau in Choltice and Africké muzeum (the Museum of Africa) in the town of Holic, which is devoted to Dr. Emil Holub, a famous world traveller born in Holic. Every year, many visitors are also coming to the National Stud Farm in Kladruby nad Labem, which was inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2019 as the first stud farm in the world. In the Svitavy District, tourists are attracted by the Svojanov Castle or the Litomyšl Chateau (and its grounds), which was already inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1999. Its attractiveness was enhanced by revitalisation of the whole chateau complex including the "Church of the Discovery of the Holy Cross" and a Regional Museum. The revitalisation ranked the first in the Gloria Musaealis National Museum Competition in 2014 in the category of "Museum Activity of the Year". In the Ústí nad Orlicí District, ruins of the following castles are well-known: Lanšperk, Litice, and Žampach. In Letohrad, tourists are interested in Muzeum řemesel (the Museum of Crafts), the Chateau, and a newly reconstructed fortress "Orlice". Renovated premises of the Chateau in Nové Hradky near the town of Vysoké Mýto are becoming a tourist landmark. Since 2014, the Museum of Car Bodywork has been located in Vysoké Mýto. Music in the Region is usually connected with famous Komorní filharmonie (the Pardubice Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra); also Smetanova Litomyšl (the Smetana's Litomyšl festival of classical (opera) music) and music festivals held in Polička (the birthplace of the composer Bohuslav Martinů) are traditional to the Region. As for theatre venues, the most famous one is Východočeské divadlo (the Theatre of East Bohemia) in Pardubice, which has been holding, besides others, the GRAND Festival of comedies (GRAND Festival smíchu) – an overview of comedies performed by theatre companies from all over the Czech Republic since 2001. Already since 1995, Přelouč has hosted the awarding ceremony of Cena Františka Filipovského (the Prize of František Filipovský) for dubbing.

Regarding **sport** activities, the Pardubice Racecourse, where the Velká Pardubická Steeplechase is held, is the best known. Motor sports fans are certain to recall the Golden Helmet Motorcycle Speedway Race (Zlatá přilba České republiky). Moreover, the Pardubický Region ranks on the top regarding other sports, too. The ice hockey club of the city of Pardubice has been participating in the Czech (formerly Czechoslovak) top ice hockey league since 1950; it won Czechoslovak and Czech championships six times and trained several very talented players to play hockey worldwide. The basketball team of the city of Pardubice plays in the top Czech men's basketball competition. Local tennis courts are frequently recalled by almost every Czech famous tennis player, because the Championship of the Czech Republic (Tennis Junior Championship), which takes place in Pardubice, is a junior tennis tournament, which opens professional career for the talented youth.

In the end, the following are several facts that made the Pardubický Region unique in comparison to other Regions of the CR in 2023:

- the highest share of households which make ends meet with great difficulty;
- the lowest average gross monthly wages of professionals;
- the lowest share of long-term unemployed persons (12+ months) in the population aged 15–64 years;

- *the highest volume of agricultural output per hectare of utilised agricultural area;*
- *the highest number of reared calves per 100 cows;*
- *the highest production of eggs for consumption;*
- *the highest beef production;*
- *the highest consumption of organic fertilisers per hectare of utilised agricultural area;*
- *the highest share of steam power plants in installed capacity in the Region;*
- *the lowest number of collective tourist accommodation establishments;*
- *the lowest number of bed places in collective tourist accommodation establishments;*
- *the lowest number of registered criminal offences per 1 000 population;*
  
- *the second lowest share of population living in houses connected to public sewerage systems;*
- *the second lowest number of marriages per 1 000 population;*
- *the second highest number of born calves per 100 cows;*
- *the second highest livestock density of pigs per 100 hectares of the arable land;*
- *the second highest consumption of calcareous fertilisers per hectare of utilised agricultural area;*
- *the second highest share of electricity produced in steam power plants;*
- *the second lowest share of non-residents of guests in collective tourist accommodation establishments;*
- *the second highest share of recipients of early (premature) old-age pensions in all old-age pension recipients;*
  
- *the third highest specific emissions of sulphur dioxide (t/km<sup>2</sup>; REZZO 1–4);*
- *the third highest share of the employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing of the total employed;*
- *the third highest production of poultry for slaughter;*
- *the third lowest death loss of calves from born calves;*
- *the third lowest average monthly amount of old-age pensions of males (without widower's pensions paid simultaneously);*
  
- *the fourth highest share of arable land in the total area of the Region;*
- *the fourth highest specific emissions of nitrogen oxides (t/km<sup>2</sup>; REZZO 1–4);*
- *the fourth highest average price per 1 m<sup>3</sup> of wastewater discharged (sewage collection charges);*
- *the fourth lowest population;*
- *the fourth highest number of live births per population;*
- *the fourth highest number of emigrants per population;*
- *the fourth lowest number of abortions per 100 births;*
- *the fourth lowest number of job applicants kept in the labour office register per job vacancy kept in the labour office register;*
- *the fourth lowest number of guests accommodated in collective accommodation establishments per 1 000 population.*