

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION

The Liberecký Region comprises of the Česká Lípa District, the Jablonec nad Nisou District, the Liberec District, and the Semily District. From 1 January 2003, there are 10 administrative districts of the municipalities with extended powers (the 3rd level municipalities) and within them 21 territorial districts of municipalities with authorised municipal authority (the 2nd level municipalities) in its territory.

The Region is situated in the north of the Czech Republic (CR). The territory includes northern part of the Česká kotlina basin, Jizerské hory (the Jizera Mountains), western part of Krkonoše (the Giant Mountains) including their foothills and eastern part of Lužické hory (the Lužice Mountains). The northern part of the Region is bordering the Federal Republic of Germany in the length of 24.1 km and Poland in the length of 133.5 km. In the east, the Region neighbours the Královéhradecký Region, in the south the Středočeský Region, and in the west the Ústecký Region.

The Liberecký Region covers only 4.0% of the total area of the Czech Republic. With the exception of the City of Prague, the Region is the smallest one in the Czech Republic with its area of 3 163 square kilometres. Agricultural land comprises 44.1% of the Region's area; the share of arable land (19.4%) is well below the national average, whereas forest land accounts for a considerably high percentage of the Region's territory (44.7%).

The whole Region is mostly mountainous; it has an upland character. The highest point of the Region is the Kotel peak (altitude 1 435 m) above the town of Rokytnice nad Jizerou in the Semily District. The lowest point at an altitude of 208 m lies in the Liberec District on the place where the Smědá River leaves the territory of the Czech Republic. The most famous peak of the Region is Ještěd (altitude 1 012 m), which is the highest point of the Ještěd Mountain Range. The climate in the north-eastern part of the Region (the Jizera Mountains, the Giant Mountains with its foothills) belongs to a slightly cold area, while the western and south-western parts have conditions of a moderately warm area. Water flows out of the Region in three rivers and two seas. The basin of the Ploučnice River is in the west, the basin of the Jizera River is in the east, with both rivers flowing into the Labe River, and the basin of the Lužická Nisa River, respectively Odra River is in the north. Supplies of ground water are mainly found near the southern border, while in the north-east, there is a protected area of natural accumulation of surface water. Sources of mineral water and healing peat are also present in the Region.

In terms of natural science, the Liberecký Region is a very important area; it is characterised by a great variety of natural ecosystems, many protected areas, and important habitats of fauna and flora. There are the Krkonoše National Park and 5 protected landscape areas in the Region: České středohoří (the Bohemian Low Mountain Range), Jizerské hory (the Jizera Mountains), Lužické hory (the Lužice Mountains), Český ráj (the Bohemian Paradise), and Kokořínsko – Máchův kraj (the Kokořín Area – Mácha Region); 8 national nature reserves, 9 national nature monuments, 36 nature reserves, and 73 nature monuments.

Regarding raw materials of the Liberecký Region, dominating are glass sands and foundry sands of good quality. There are also important deposits of low-content uranium ores the mining of which was, however, downsized. The following were also typical for the Region: ornamental and building stone (e.g. granite from Liberec, roofing slate from Železný Brod, quality basalt and quartzite, etc.), which were mined and processed there. Nowadays, the quarrying focuses on mining of sand, gravel, and broken stone aggregates. The coal deposit of the Giant Mountains foothill basin reaches into the territory of the Semily District.

By the end of 2022, the population of the Liberecký Region was 449 177 (4.1% of the CR's population), ranking the Region second smallest in the country. The average population density is 142.0 people per square kilometre, which is above the national average. The highest population density is in the Jablonec nad Nisou District (211.7 people per square kilometre) and the Liberec District (181.9 people per square kilometre). As at 31 December 2022, there were 215 municipalities in the Region with the average municipality area of 14.7 square kilometres. The percentage of urban population was 76.8%. A lower percentage of urban population is reported only for the Semily District, in which only 55.7% of the population lived in towns. The main centre of the Region is the city of Liberec (107 389 population), the second largest town in the Region is Jablonec nad Nisou (45 830 population).

The average age of the population in the Liberecký Region is 42.6 years, the same as the national average. The distribution of the population by age varies significantly in individual areas of the Region. The population of the Česká Lípa and of the Liberec areas rank among the youngest in the Czech Republic, whereas the population of the Tanvald, of the Jilemnice, and of the Nový Bor areas among the oldest.

The economic structure of the Liberecký Region is predominantly of industrial nature. The traditional manufacture of textiles has recently lost its dominant role it had for over twenty years. The economic recession from the end of 2008 weakened the industry of manufacture of glass and imitation jewellery, which is sure to

rise again. The predominant manufacturing industry is focused on the car manufacture and manufacturing of rubber and plastic products. The agriculture, which functions, in fact, just as a supplementary branch of the economic structure, grows mainly cereals and forage plants for cattle breeding. Tourism is a rather significant part of the Liberecký Region's economy.

The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in the Liberecký Region was 72.1% of the average CR's GDP per capita in 2022. As for the CR's total GDP, the share of the Liberecký Region stood at 3.0%.

As at 31 December 2022, the Region's share of unemployed persons, calculated from data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the CR, was 3.97%. As for the order of Regions by share of unemployed persons, the Liberecký Region ranked fifth.

In terms of education, there is a network of basic and secondary schools in the Region. High representation of secondary schools of art that reach beyond the regional context is typical for the Liberecký Region. Most of them are glass and imitation-jewellery secondary schools of applied arts. Higher education in the Region is provided by the Technical University of Liberec.

Basic health care is provided by a network of outpatient care establishments and pharmacies. Acute care, aftercare, and physiotherapeutic care is provided by a network of nine hospitals. The most important health establishment of the Liberecký Region is the Liberec Hospital. The Institute of the Arm and Plastic Surgery in the town of Vysoké nad Jizerou is an establishment of multi-regional significance. Two balneological centres in the Region treat diseases of the musculoskeletal system, heart, the blood circulation system, and rheumatism; they are: Lázně Libverda and Lázně Kundratice (the Libverda Spa and the Kundratice Spa).

Social activity focuses mainly on care of the elderly who are taken care of in a network of retirement homes and community care homes with day care services. A unique position in the area of social care of young people in the Liberecký Region belongs to the Institute of Jedlička ("Jedličkův ústav" in Czech). The system of social care facilities (social service establishments) also consists of many reception centres and centres for people in need (special care homes), which concentrate on treatment and prevention of addictions.

The Liberecký Region has a rich historic tradition represented by many historic buildings and monuments and cultural establishments. The institutions of supra-regional significance include primarily the Severočeské muzeum (the North-Bohemian Museum) in Liberec, the Regional Gallery in Liberec, and the Regional Research Library in Liberec. Also the following ones are important cultural institutions: Divadlo F. X. Šaldy (the František Xaver Šalda Theatre), with the scene of Small Theatre, and Naivní divadlo (the Naive Theatre) in Liberec, the Zoological Garden and the Botanical Garden in Liberec. A number of museums and galleries scattered about the Region are establishments of regional importance. Those interested in tradition of glass and artificial jewellery of this area can visit, for example, museums of glass making in Nový Bor, Kamenický Šenov, and Železný Brod or the Museum of Glass and Artificial Jewellery in Jablonec nad Nisou. The Museum of Bohemian Paradise in Turnov owns collections from the area of geology, mineralogy, and documentation of goldsmith's art and jewellery making, which are unique not only within the Czech Republic but also as for Europe. Extensive collections of various types of fire-fighting technology are offered by museums in Nový Oldřichov and Chrastava.

The Liberecký Region is also a well-known area in terms of tourism. Visitors from both the Czech Republic and abroad come to enjoy exceptional landscape, to see nature formations and landmarks and historic monuments of the Region. There are several specific areas in the Region that are strongly linked to tourism: the western parts of the Giant Mountains, the Jizera Mountains, Turnovsko – Český ráj (the Turnov Area – the Bohemian Paradise), the town of Doksy and its surroundings, the Lužice Mountains, and Podkrkonoší (the Giant Mountains foothills). Frequently visited attractions of national heritage significance include castles and chateaux (Bezděz, Zákupy, Sloup, Lemberk, Frýdlant, Sychrov, Grabštejn, Frýdštejn, Hrubý Rohozec, Trosky, and Valdštejn) and many religious sites (Basilica of St. Lawrence and St. Zdislava in Jablonné v Podještědí or Pilgrimage Church of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary in Hejnice). Many reservoirs and lakes can be found in the Region, too, with the most well-known Máchovo jezero (the Lake of Mácha). Road and railway border crossings and many border crossings for pedestrians help develop tourism in the Region.

The territory of the Liberecký Region includes also part of the Euroregion Neisse-Nisa-Nysa, the oldest group of its kind in the Czech Republic. It is a Euroregion of three border areas located in the territory where borders of the Czech Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the Republic of Poland meet.