

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGION

The Jihomoravský Region comprises the Blansko District, the Brno-město District, the Brno-venkov District, the Břeclav District, the Hodonín District, the Vyškov District, and the Znojmo District; it is divided into 21 administrative districts of municipalities with extended powers. With its **area of 718 779 ha** and the population of more than 1 217 thousand the Jihomoravský Region ranks fourth or third in the Czech Republic (CR). From the geographical point of view, the Region has a rather favourable location, because it lies on a historical connection between the south and the north of Europe. Within the EU, the Region neighbours with Slovakia and Austria; within the Czech Republic, it neighbours with the Jihočeský Region, the Vysočina Region, the Pardubický Region, the Olomoucký Region, and the Zlínský Region. Various natural conditions in the Region naturally influence the way of the landscape utilisation and the way of life in a concrete locality. Four different characters of basic landscape types can be distinguished in the Region as follows:

- Large cave complexes of the Moravian Karst (Moravský kras) in the northern part of the Region known especially thanks to the Macocha Abyss (138.5 m deep), hillsides, and a lot of protected localities. Many caves of this unique area, which belongs to the cleanest in the CR as for ecology, are accessible to the public and visited by plenty of Czech and foreign tourists.
- The southern part of the Region is mostly a flat area of fields, meadows, and vineyards with rests of bottomland forests alongside the Dyje River. The Podyjí National Park in the south-western corner of the Region is an example of an exceptionally well-preserved river valley in a richly wooded landscape. Many bodies of water near the Dyje River between the towns of Znojmo and Břeclav have become an ideal nesting site for the waterfowl. Symbols of this part of southern Moravia are: Pálava and the Lednice-Valtice area. Lovers of all water sports and fishing visit the Nové Mlýny reservoir every year.
- Behind the Morava River, in the eastern part, the landscape gradually elevates to the hills of the White Carpathians (Bílé Karpaty). This biosphere reserve belongs to the most precious natural areas in Europe.
- Although the landscape around the city of Brno is influenced by the existence of the large urban agglomeration, the surroundings of the city are considered to be one of the most beautiful in the CR. In the north, it is adjacent to the forests of the Moravian Karst; in the south, there are open flats of the southern Moravia and right at the borders of the city there is the Brno Dam.

There are two places in the territory of the Region, which are inscribed on the UNESCO's World Heritage List. First to be mentioned is the Lednice-Valtice area, which is an example of a system of forests, meadows, and water bodies marvellously complemented by romantic cathedrals, summer houses (pavilions), and, first of all, the chateaux of Lednice and Valtice. The Tugendhat Villa in the city of Brno is a unique example of modern architecture of the interwar period. Two biosphere reserves declared by UNESCO – Dolní Morava and White Carpathians (Bílé Karpaty) – are also an important part of the Jihomoravský Region.

The highest point of the Region is in the Hodonín District on the mountainside close to the Durda peak (altitude 842 m), which is on the border with the Zlínský Region and Slovakia. In the Břeclav District, you can find a municipality of Lanžhot, which is the most southern part of Moravia; in its territory there is the lowest point of the Region (altitude 150 m), which is located at the confluence of the Dyje River and the Morava River. The Jihomoravský Region has a rich history, as can be seen from archaeological sites, chateaux, castles, castle ruins, churches, and synagogues. Near the city of Brno, there is a battlefield of one of the bloodiest battles of Napoleon's wars known as the battle of the three emperors near Slavkov. The folk architecture can be seen in the Strážnice open air museum. There is also an abundance of folk feasts such as carnivals, feasts, building of maypoles, and fairs maintained in the Jihomoravský Region. The Region is also known for its tradition of viticulture (and viniculture) – there are several unique winery buildings. In Přímětice, there is one of the biggest cross-vaulted cellars in the world. However, ancient unique wine cellars close to the municipality of Petrov called petrovské Plže (a conservation area) and baroque cellars in Pavlov should not be missed out either.

Agricultural land comprises almost **60%** of the Region's total area, 82% of that is arable land. The highest share of arable land in the agricultural land is in the Znojmo District and the Vyškov District. As for production, agriculture focuses mainly on cereals, rape, and green and silage maize. Thanks to very favourable climatic conditions, the Jihomoravský Region has a long tradition and a high level of specialised agricultural production: viniculture, fruit-growing, and vegetable-growing. Over 90% of the area of the CR's total vineyards are in the Region. Viniculture is developed mainly in the Břeclav District (with almost 50% of the total area of vineyards of the CR), the Hodonín District, the Znojmo District, and partially also in the Brno-venkov District. In terms of livestock production, the Jihomoravský Region ranks among the top places for farming of poultry and swine.

The Jihomoravský Region has a significant economic potential. The **gross domestic product (GDP)** generated in the Region accounts for 11.0% of the Czech Republic's gross domestic product. The GDP share almost corresponds to the population share of the Region, which is 11.2% of the CR's population.

Owing to the industrial tradition of the city of Brno and its surroundings, industry still plays a dominant role in the Region's economy; its share in the total gross value added (GVA) produced in the Region is 25.2%, whereas the share of agriculture (another traditional branch of especially southern parts of the Region) is only 2.6%. Construction makes 6.4% and developing services make 65.8% of the GVA.

The Jihomoravský Region as a whole has a rather **good quality of air**. Air pollution, noise, and similar unfavourable influences are only of a local character, especially around large industrial centres. High levels of specific emissions of pollutants are observed particularly around the city of Brno. What also contributes to the pollution is an increasing number of cars, especially in big towns and cities. An increasing number of the population is connected to sewerage systems with wastewater treatment plants; it is one of the ways to improve heavy water pollution of parts of the Morava River, the Dyje River, and the Svatka River. The issue of environmental protection is paid close attention to in the Jihomoravský Region.

The Region's **population** was **1 217 200** as at 31 December 2022, which is 11.2% of the CR's total population. As for the population breakdown by sex, females were prevailing; there were 1 041 females per 1 000 males in the Region. It is influenced primarily by the structure of the city of Brno, in which 1 063 females per 1 000 males live. Regarding the distribution of the population by age in 2022 when compared to 2021, there was an increase in the 15–64 years age group (+3.0%), an increase was observed in the 65+ years age group (+1.7%) and also in the 0–14 years age group (+3.3%). The ratio of the 65+ years population to that under 15 years of age (the ageing index) amounted to 123.6 in 2022 (in 2021 it was 125.5). The ageing index for females in 2022 was 147.7, while for males it was only 100.6. The difference is caused mainly by a lower mean age of males at death.

An important part of regional cooperation, supported in particular by the Regional Authority of the Jihomoravský Region, is formation of microregions. The formation of microregions is an important and positive trend to advance common interests and plans mainly in rural municipalities with the aim to achieve desirable changes in all of the municipalities of a certain territory. Recently, cross-border cooperation in the "Pomoraví" Euroregion has been developing; the Euroregion comprises Weinviertel, South Moravia, and Western Slovakia regions. Most of these areas are characterized by an intense agricultural activity with the exception of urban agglomerations of Vienna, Brno, and Bratislava, in which industrial and trade activities are concentrated. The following belong to the main priorities of development of the Jihomoravský Region: development of the "Pomoraví" Euroregion and cross-border cooperation, support of the conceptual development of the territory, development of cooperation at Euroregional level mainly in the domains of science, education, health care, social services, culture, and sport.

The city of Brno is a natural catchment area for the entire southern Moravia; it is located at the confluence of the Svatka River and the Svitava River. Being an important regional centre, which is situated on the crossroads of motorways to Prague, Vienna, Bratislava, and Olomouc, it is a place where traditional international exhibitions and fairs take place thus highlighting the city's status of a busy international business centre. It is the second largest city in the Czech Republic, the importance of which reaches beyond local context: it is a seat of many institutions of national importance, especially judiciary; it is also an important centre of culture and higher education.

The number of employees in enterprises that have their workplaces located in the Region increased in 2021. The **average wage** of an employee of **CZK 35 693** per headcount person ranks the Region below the national average (CZK 36 587).

According to results of the Labour Force Sample Survey, the participation rate of the Region's population is slightly below the Czech Republic's average; in the Jihomoravský Region there are a total of 578.8 thousand employed persons. The highest number of persons is employed in manufacturing (143.1 thousand) and in wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (67.3 thousand).

According to data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the number of job applicants increased in 2022. **The share of unemployed persons (4.36%)** still belonged to the highest in the CR. The Jihomoravský Region ranked thirteenth of the 14 Regions. The number of vacancies decreased; there are 1.5 job applicants for a vacancy on average in the Region.

As for transport, the Jihomoravský Region has an important transit function. The backbone of the transport system consists of class I motorways D1 and D2 and class II motorways D46 and D52. The city of Brno is an important transport junction of the road, motorway, and rail transport and of the integrated transport system of the Jihomoravský Region. The civil airport in Brno–Tuřany can accept all types of aircrafts all the year round. Two main railway corridors, which interconnect EU countries, go through the Region. The city of Brno is a member of an association of European cities in the interest of which is to build a high-speed railway. Especially road transport intensity increases, which is clear from the number of registered passenger cars (660 thousand) and trucks (86 thousand) in the Region in 2022. The dense road transport network consists of motorways and roads in the total length of 4.4 thousand km.

In terms of international tourism, a prime role is played by the natural and cultural heritage areas in the Region, namely the Lednice–Valtice Cultural Landscape, the Moravian Karst (Moravský kras), and the Slavkov (Austerlitz) Battlefield. The metropolis of Brno has a similar status with its national heritage buildings and monuments. One of the most attractive landscape areas is the Podyjí National Park. Much cultural and social attractiveness attracts visitors to the territory of the Region, which is of a high benefit for the development of tourism. From this point of view, viniculture tourism is one of advantages of the Region. The Region draws its unique character from folklore and folk culture. In this sense, the influence of cycling is positive in the southern part of Moravia, too, also in international context (the Moravian–Silesian long-distance cycle track, Greenways, the Amber cycle track, and a cycle track from the city of Brno to Vienna are there).

*Accommodation services are offered by **1 037 collective accommodation establishments** such as hotels, motels, and camps, in which 2.0 million guests (including 26.4% of foreigners) were accommodated in 2022.*

*Health care in the Region is ensured by **20 acute care hospitals** with a total of 6 233 beds as well as by a sufficient number of other independent health establishments, independent surgeries of physicians, and pharmacies or dispensaries.*

*A sufficient network of pre-school and school establishments belongs to advantages of the Region. Pre-school children attend **684 nursery schools**; primary education is provided in **491 basic schools** from which most pupils continue their study in **126 secondary schools**. The effort of the secondary and vocational education is to ensure interconnection of the offer of secondary education and the needs of the labour market.*

The education level of the Region's population is above average, which is also contributed to by a high quality system of tertiary education. The necessary education is provided to students both in public and private universities in the city of Brno, the town of Znojmo, and the municipality of Lednice; the University of Defence in Brno should not be missed out either.