

Trnavský kraj - Characteristic of the region

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Location, area, geographical conditions

Trnavský kraj, covering an area of 4,146.3 km², makes up 8.5% of the total area of Slovakia. It is located in the western part of the Slovak Republic, bordering the Czech Republic and the Republic of Austria to the north and northwest, and the Republic of Hungary to the south. It also borders three regions Bratislavský kraj, Nitriansky kraj and Trenčiansky kraj.

Geographically, the southern part of the region is dominated by the Podunajská nížina lowland, while the northern part is covered by the Záhorská nížina lowland. These two areas are separated by the Malé Karpaty mountain range, with its highest hill, Záruby (766.7 m above sea level), being the highest point in the region. The lowest point is located on the bank of the Asód-Čergov canal in the cadastral district of Okoč municipality (107.1 m above sea level).

The region spans two climatic areas – a warm and moderately warm zone. The southern part of the Podunajská nížina lowland is the driest and warmest, while the Malé Karpaty mountain is the coldest area. The average annual temperature is around 10°C.

The water network of the region belongs to the basin of the river Dunaj (Danube). Water resources are quite abundant, rivers Dunaj, Váh, Malý Dunaj, and Dudváh serving as sources of both utility and drinking water. Several water reservoirs have been built on these rivers and their tributaries, with the largest and most famous being the Gabčíkovo waterworks.

Mineral resources in the region include crude oil and natural gas in the north, while clay, limestone, dolomites, sand for glassmaking and foundries, as well as gravel and sand deposits are found in other parts of the region. The Malé Karpaty mountains provide high-quality beech and oak wood, which is used for fuel and various industrial purposes.

The region contains an extensive network of protected areas. There are four protected landscape areas: the Dunajské Luhy, Biele Karpaty, Malé Karpaty and Záhorie, 8 national nature reserves, 27 nature reserves, 28 protected areas, 23 natural monuments, 1 national natural monument – jaskyňa Driny cave, and 10 protected bird areas.

According to the territorial-administrative arrangement based on the Act No. 221/1996 of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, the region is divided into seven districts: Dunajská Streda, Galanta, Hlohovec, Piešťany, Senica, Skalica, and Trnava. The largest district is Dunajská Streda, which makes up 25.9% of the total area of the region, while the smallest district is Hlohovec, covering only 6.4% of the region's territory.

The region consists of 251 municipalities, with a notable concentration of population in 17 municipalities that hold town status. These towns house 46% of the population. Nearly a quarter of the urban population residing in Trnava.

Demographics background

As of December 31, 2023, the Trnavský kraj had a population of 566,114, making it the least populous region in Slovakia, accounting for 10.4% of the national population. With a population density of 136 people per km², it is the second most densely populated region. The highest population density per km² is in the Trnava district (179 inhabitants), and the lowest in the Senica district (87 inhabitants).

In 2023, there were 4,634 live births and 5,786 deaths in the region. The region has long experienced a natural population decline, with a decrease of 1,152 people in 2023. However, the region had a positive migration balance, gaining 1,693 people. Overall, the region's population increased by 541 people.

Changes in the age structure of the population continued in 2023. Children under the age of 14 made up 14.9% of the population, which was 4 percentage points lower than the share of people over 65 years old. Over the past decade, the proportion of children under 14 has increased by only 1 percentage point, while the share of seniors has risen by 4.6 percentage points. The mean age of population was 43 years.

In 2023, 2,672 couples got married, and 952 marriages ended in divorce. The number of marriages declined by almost 10% year-on-year, while the number of divorces remained at the same level as in 2022. Compared to the past decade, the number of marriages was the third-lowest, and the number of divorces was the second-lowest.

Economic and social specifics

A significant number of industrial and agricultural businesses, a wide range of services, and the region's favourable location near the capital with well-developed infrastructure offer a wide array of employment opportunities. In 2023, economically active population (employed and unemployed aged 15 and over) made up nearly 52% of the population. The economic activity rate, or the proportion of economically active individuals to the population aged 15 and over, was 61.3%. The employment rate (the ratio of employed aged 20-64 to the total population in the same age group) reached 78.6%, and the unemployment rate, or the proportion of unemployed to the economically active population, was 4%. The average monthly wage was 1,512 EUR, which was 116 EUR below the national average.

By the end of 2023, there were 27.2 thous. legal entities operating in the region, of which enterprises made up more than 87%, along with 43.7 natural persons, of which nearly 94 %

working under the trade law. The enterprises were primarily engaged in wholesale and retail trade, vehicle repairs, professional, scientific, and technical activities, as well as in the industry. Over a quarter of the self-employed persons worked in construction.

The gross domestic product (GDP) of the Trnavský kraj in 2023 reached 14.1 billion EUR at current prices, contributing 11.5% to the national GDP. On a per capita basis, it exceeded the national average by 9.9%, reaching 24,761 EUR, which was the second-highest value in regional comparison.

In 2023, the region's gross value added was most contributed by the industry (38.1%), public administration, defense, and compulsory social security (16.4%), and trade, including vehicle repairs, transport, storage, accommodation, and food services (13.5%).

Trnavský kraj is one of the most productive agricultural regions in Slovakia, ranking just behind the Nitriansky kraj. Agricultural land covers 69.3% of the total area, with the share of arable land of 89.7%, the highest of any region in Slovakia. The productive capacity of the agricultural land in the region is very good, with cereals, oilseeds, sugar beets, and perennial fodder being the most prominent, and the region achieves the highest yields per hectare in Slovakia. Animal production also plays a role, particularly pig and cattle farming (mainly in the Dunajská Streda district).

The industrial structure includes almost all activities. The industrial distribution is geographically uneven. The northern and central parts are industrial, while the southern part is industrial and agricultural. Alongside agricultural production, food production (milk and dairy products, meat and meat products, sugar, confectionery, and sparkling wines) is well-developed. A significant part of the region's production includes computer, electronic, and optical products and motor vehicles. Other important industries include the production of metal structures, machinery, and equipment, the manufacturing of chemicals and chemical products, and the production and processing of metals. In 2023, industrial enterprises employed nearly 60 thous. persons and generated turnover 16 bill. EUR. from their performance and goods.

In terms of construction production, Trnavský kraj is one of the weaker regions. In 2023, construction organizations completed production valued at 653.5 mill. EUR by own employees and contractually agreed construction production reaching 750 mill. EUR. Just 3,435 new apartments were completed in the region, more than half of them was located in the Dunajská Streda and Trnava districts.

The transport position of Trnava Region and particularly the regional capital, Trnava, is significantly exposed, especially regarding both domestic and international transport. Road, rail, and water transport are all represented. Important road connections passing through the region include routes from Bratislava through Trnava to Žilina and from Hodonín through Trnava to Nitra. The region's road network includes 1,963 km of roads, with motorways and expressways making up only 5.6%. By the end of 2023, there were 427 thous. motor vehicles registered in the region, with 71% being passenger cars.

Rail transport includes key routes such as Bratislava - Žilina and the electrified single-track lines from Trnava to Galanta and Trnava to Kúty, which extend the southern railway route towards

the Czech Republic. The Bratislava - Galanta - Štúrovo route is also important. The Gabčíkovo, waterworks have significantly improved sailing conditions on the Slovak section of the Danube.

The region has a relatively well-developed network of pre-school and school facilities. In 2023, education at the pre-primary, primary, secondary, and lower tertiary levels was provided by 318 kindergartens, 211 primary schools, 21 grammar schools, 41 secondary vocational schools, and 1 conservatory. The centre of higher education is Trnava town, which is the seat of the University of Trnava, the University of St. Kyrillius and Methodius and the Slovak Technical University – Faculty of Materials Science and Technology. There is also the University DANUBIUS in Sládkovičovo.

Healthcare in 2023 was provided by 1,305 healthcare facilities, including 8 hospitals, 995 outpatient healthcare units, and 3 institutes for treatment. The region's development benefits greatly from geothermal and medicinal springs, particularly in the spa towns of Piešťany and Smrdáky.

In 2023, the region had 5 theaters, including small and independent ones, with the Theatre in Trnava being the most prominent. Film art was represented by 15 permanent cinemas with 25 screening halls. Historical and cultural exhibitions were presented in 2 galleries and 22 museums, with the most exhibits being presented by the Western Slovak Museum in Trnava. Cultural and educational activities were organized by cultural centres, artistic and educational groups. Literature enthusiasts had access to 148 operational libraries.

The regional capital, Trnava, is often referred to as the "Slovak Rome" due to its numerous historical sacred buildings. The region boasts many castles, chateaus, and manor houses (Ostrý Kameň, Korlátka, Dobrá Voda, Smolenice Castle, the manor house in Dolná Krupá), which are popular tourist destinations. The Zahorie part of the region is known for the basilica in Šaštín and the cultural-historical monuments of Skalica. In the Danube region, tourists are attracted to several watermills on the Malý Dunaj, as well as thermal spas in Dunajská Streda, Veľký Meder, and Topoľníky.

In 2023, the region had 338 accommodation facilities, with nearly 386,000 visitors utilizing their services.