

## Bratislavský kraj - Characteristic of the region

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### Location, area, geographical conditions

Bratislavský kraj, with an area of 2 052.6 km<sup>2</sup>, is the smallest within the Slovak Republic. Its proportion of the area of Slovakia is 4.2%. It is located in the south western part of Slovakia. The region has a common border with the Republic of Austria and the Republic of Hungary. In the north, east and southeast it borders with Trnavský kraj. There is the westernmost point in the Slovak Republic on the western border with Austria, in Záhorská Ves municipality in Malacky district. The highest point of the region is the Vysoká hill (759.1 m above sea level) in the Malé Karpaty mountain range. The lowest point in the region is the bottom of the excavation pit near Pezinské tehelne (brickyard in Pezinok) on the territory of the town Pezinok (113.9 m above sea level).

The territory of the region is formed in the western part by Záhorská nížina lowland, from the southwest to the northeast there is the mountain range Malé Karpaty, the eastern and south-eastern part is occupied by Podunajská nížina lowland. Climatically, the region belongs to a moderately warm area, while in the southern part contacts the warm area. The water network belongs to the river Dunaj (Danube) basin, the second largest river in the Europe, flowing through the region in the length of about 37 km, which forms part of the natural border with Austria and Hungary.

Lowlands are a source of raw materials for construction. The most extensive in terms of volume are gravel deposits in the districts Senec and Malacky. In the districts of Bratislava IV (Devínska Nová Ves), Senec and Pezinok there are reserves of brick clays. There is a source of quality wood used for fuel and various industrial purposes and also deposits of several minerals in Malé Karpaty mountain. There are several deposits of natural gas in the district Malacky.

Within the region, there are three protected landscape areas: Malé Karpaty, Záhorie and Dunajské Luhy, 8 national nature reserves, 24 nature reserves, 24 protected sites, 7 natural monuments, 1 national natural monument, 1 protected landscape element and 5 bird protection areas.

According to the territorial-administrative arrangement in accordance with the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No 221/1996 Coll. is divided into 8 districts: Bratislava I, Bratislava II, Bratislava III, Bratislava IV, Bratislava V, Malacky, Pezinok and Senec. The districts Bratislava I – Bratislava V form the territory of the capital of Slovakia – Bratislava. With

an area of 9.6 km<sup>2</sup>, Bratislava I district is the smallest district, not only within the region but within the Slovak Republic. It occupies only 0.5 % of regional area. The largest district in the region is Malacky district, which accounts for 46.3 %.

The territorial and settlement structure of Bratislavský kraj consists of 73 municipalities, one of them has the status of the capital of Slovakia (Bratislava) and 6 has the town status (Malacky, Stupava, Svätý Jur, Pezinok, Modra, Senec). Bratislava, the largest city in Slovakia, is the administrative, economic, political, educational and cultural centre of the state and the region. It consists of 17 town parts with their local government.

According to the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No 180/2013 Coll. district authorities in Bratislava, Malacky, Pezinok and Senec are local state administration bodies. The self-governing bodies are the Office of the Bratislava Self-Governing Region and municipal, local and town offices. The City Authority of the capital of Slovak Republic – Bratislava performs the self-governing functions on the territory of Bratislava.

## Demographic background

With a population of 732,757 as at December 31, 2023, Bratislavský kraj accounted for 13.5 % of the total population of Slovakia. The population density was the highest in Slovakia and amounted to 356 inhabitants per 1 km<sup>2</sup>. Bratislava I district was the most densely populated. There were 4,917 inhabitants per 1 km<sup>2</sup>, the most sparsely populated was Malacky district with 84 inhabitants per square kilometre. Population statistics mainly affected by capital city. Approximately 65.2% of regional population live in Bratislava.

There were born 6,523 children and 6,344 people died in the region during the year 2022. The natural increase was very low, only 179 inhabitants. Due to migration, the population of the region increased by 4,208 people. The average age of the residents of the region in 2023 was 42 years. The share of children in the population was 16.9% and it was by 1,5 p.p. lower than the share of seniors (18,4 %). During the last ten years, the share of the pre-productive part of the population increased by 1.7 p.p., but the share of the post-productive component grew doubly faster, up to 3.4 p.p. The population aged between 15 and 64 accounted for 64.6%, which was the lowest among all Slovak regions.

In 2023, 3,684 engaged couples got married. Marriages decreased by up to 12% year-on-year. The region recorded a higher year-on-year decline of marriages only in 2020, when couples postponed marriages due to anti-pandemic measures. The number of marriages was also the third lowest since 2015. Fewer couples got married only in the pandemic years 2020 and 2021.

The courts divorced 1,372 marriages. Although the number of divorces increased by more than a quarter year-on-year, it was still lower than in the years before the pandemic.

## Economic and social specifics

The economically active population of the region accounted for 54.6 % of the total population in 2022. In comparison with other regions of Slovakia, the economic activity rate (66%) and the employment rate in age 20 – 64 years (84.5 %) were the highest and the unemployment rate (2.3 %) the lowest. The average nominal monthly earnings reaching EUR 1 906 was the highest in comparison with other regions. It was by 27% higher than the national average.

In Bratislavský kraj, there were 96.8 thous. legal persons, of which enterprises creates 89.1 thous. of them, and 65.3 thous. natural persons, 59.8 thous. of them were self-employed persons. In the region, exactly in Bratislava, more than half of enterprises and almost half of self-employed persons operated in the sector of professional, scientific, technical activities; in administrative, support service activities and in wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles as of Dec. 31, 2022.

In terms of gross domestic product (GDP) Bratislavský kraj is the most efficient region within Slovakia. The regional gross domestic product reached EUR 30,709 mill. at current prices in 2022. The volume of regional GDP represented 28% of national GDP. The regional GDP per capita was equal EUR 41,193 at current prices and 2 times higher than the national average.

The largest proportion on the regional gross value added belonged to trade, transport, accommodation and food service activities (22.1%), the share of the industry was more than 16% and real estate activities 15.7%.

The area of agricultural land is less than half of the regional area. However, there is a significant tradition of grapes growing, especially on the eastern foothills of Malé Karpaty mountain. Bratislavský kraj is the second largest producer of grapes within Slovakia. From the livestock production, a poultry breeding has a good results and it is concentrated mainly in Pezinok district and cattle breeding in Malacky district.

The most important is the chemical and automotive industry, mechanical and electrical engineering as well as food industry. The turnover of industrial enterprises reached EUR 48.3 bill. in 2022, the main part of it came from enterprises seating in the capital city. The industry employed up to 78 thous. persons.

The highest volumes of the construction production presented a strong position of regional construction in 2022. The values of construction production carried out by own employees reached EUR 1,704 mill. and contractually agreed construction production EUR 4,524 mill. Bratislavský kraj has a long-term leading position in dwelling construction among the Slovak regions. During the year 2022, 4,394 new dwellings were completed in it, the most were built in the Senec district, up to 1,578 apartments.

The importance of the tertiary sector is also growing in the economy of the region, especially trade, service and banking and insurance.

The traffic position of Bratislavský kraj, especially Bratislava, is significantly exposed, especially

in terms of international transit. All modes of transport are presented in the region. A specific position has a water transport using a river Danube. Bratislavský kraj has the shortest road network (852 km in 2022) but has the longest network of motorways (136 km). There were 609 thous. motor vehicles registered in the region at the end of year 2022, more than three quarters of them were passenger cars.

There were 318 kindergartens, 175 basic schools, 45 grammar schools and 54 vocational secondary schools provided the education in 2022. In the academic year 2022/2023, there were 13 universities. They are Comenius University, Slovak Technical University, University of Economics, Academy of Performing Arts, Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Economics and Management, University of management in Bratislava, St. Elizabeth University of Health and Social Labour, Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts, Pan European University, Slovak Medical University, Academy of the Police Forces. The Faculty of Theology of the University of Trnava is located in Bratislavský kraj too. The most of students within the region were enrolled at the Comenius University, at the Slovak Technical University and at the University of Economics.

The health care on regional and national levels was provided in 2,003 health care facilities in 2022. They also included 24 hospitals, 1,575 outpatient health care facilities and 5 institutes for treatment. The largest University Hospital, highly specialized hospitals, specialized medical institutions, specialized and rehabilitation facilities providing medical care to patients from all over Slovakia are concentrated mainly in Bratislava.

There were 69 theatres including small and independent, 3 galleries, 48 museums and 145 libraries available in 2022. Slovak National Theatre has an international reputation. It comprises drama, opera and ballet scenes. Musical life in Bratislavský kraj is characteristic by its genre diversity from the significant the Slovak Philharmonic through Bratislava music festival to the other music festivals, concerts and clubs. Slovak National Gallery and Slovak National Museum present most of the exhibition and expositions in the region. The castle fortifications in Devín and Bratislava, the castle Červený Kameň and many mansions and sacral monuments are attractive for visitors. Bratislavský kraj became again the most visited region of Slovakia in 2022. It was visited by almost 1.1 million domestic and foreign visitors. Although the number of visitors to the region increased by up to 2.3 times year-on-year, it still did not reach the pre-pandemic level. Accommodation to visitors was provided by 402 accommodation facilities.