

Czech Republic:

The Czech Republic has a total area of 78.86 km² and a population of 10.5 million people. The population density is around 133/km². The capital is Prague and the country is divided into thirteen regions since 2000. Historically the Principality of Bohemia was formed from 870 to 1198. From 1189 till 1918 the Kingdom of Bohemia rose and on the 28th of October 1918 the Republic of Czechoslovakia was founded. Since the 1st of January 1993 the Czech Republic is established. The GDP per capita amounts for \$24,869 billions (PPP).

The Region: The South Bohemia Region has a population of 637,723 (2010 estimated) and the capital is Ceske Budejovice (German: Budweis or Böhmisches Budweis). The area forms one of the thirteen administrative units and has the lowest population density (approximately 62 people/km²) in the whole Czech Republic.

Nature: The landscape is dominated by the Bohemian Forest (1/3 of the area), traditional waterpools and water systems. Within the region several protected areas and landscapes have been allocated. Also several landmarks were registered by the UNESCO*. Moreover there exist many historic monuments in the area like castles, fortresses and monuments from the 12th century.

Regional Development Programme: The vision from the South-Bohemian Region administration is: to become a "rich region, drawing from the natural and cultural heritage of its previous generations and respecting its incorporation in the European Union; it aims to become a region that will attain the standards of the highly developed regions of the EU member states." (Quote: <http://www.kraj-jihocesky.cz/foreign/eng/develop.php>)

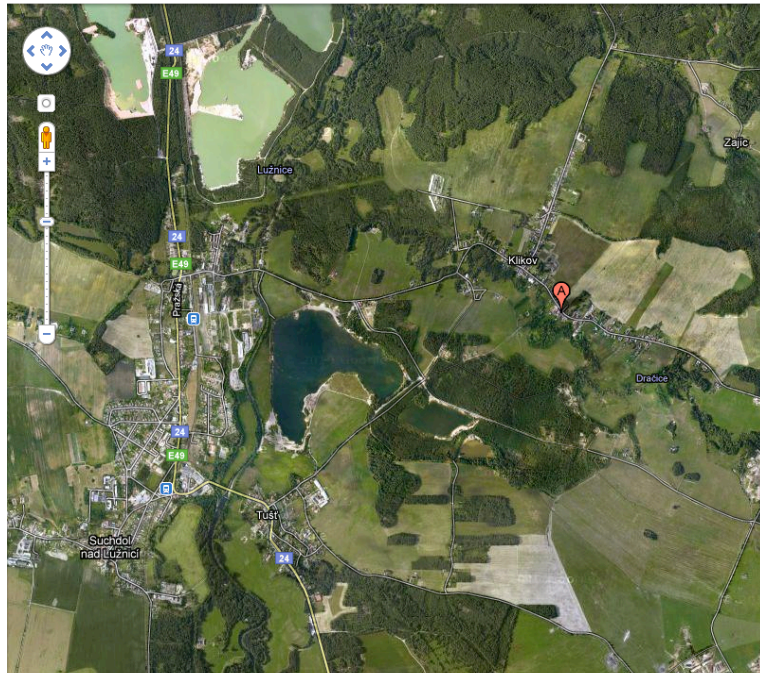


Map of South Bohemia: <http://bit.ly/qwubUH>

* UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Klikov:

Klikov is a part of the village "Suchdol nad Lužnicí" and was founded about 450 years ago. Formally the extraction of iron ore was very important and the main economic activity in Klikov. Later pottery and handicraft became more and more important. At the moment the population is very low and many inhabitants just have their weekend or summerhouse in the area but don't live in Klikov permanently.



Map of Klikov: <http://bit.ly/mYSdZN>

Water is very important in the area. There are 500 fishponds and water systems in the region. They were manmade dating back to 12th century. They are used for food production and also important for flood prevention and mitigation. The ponds can be seen as a passive flood control. Natural areas include mainly Mires, Rivers, Grassland and sand habitats.

- Economy: fishfarming, forestry, agriculture, extraction of sand, gravel, peat and clay and the processing of the materials. At the moment a new economy is raising, namely Spa and Wellness, but also hiking and bicycling tourism. This development has advantages and disadvantages because it puts pressure on the development of the area and also evokes external influences and conflicts within the population and protection programs.
- Fish breeding: The main breed is carp, its origins are in Asia, it is bred since the Middle Ages. Most of the products are exported to Germany, Austria, France and Belgium. The fish breeding has an old tradition in the area. There is a large conflict between the landscape protection programs and the fishery industry.

- Agriculture: Positive changes can be seen since the Check Revolution. The system for example has changed from centralised organisation to more decentralised agriculture and this seems to be better for the environment, causing of lower input intensive production.
- Extraction of sand, gravel, peat and clay: There was plenty of this material in the area but due to the formal centralised political system enormous masses were extracted. Now a more sustainable extraction is possible, which doesn't destroy the local ecosystems. Due to this natural orientated exploitation a sustainable way was found and also restoration programmes have been formed. These initiatives have tried to restore the damage from monoculture and intensive agriculture, now ways of recycling, reuse and sustainable agriculture have been initiated.
- Soft tourism: Tourism seems to be the future of this region. In the area (South Bohemia) are 4.000 km cycling trails and 5.000 km hiking trails.
- Local pottery in KLIKOV has a very high quality due to the availability of good clay. In 2001, Martin Hadrava formed a Society for the preservation of the pottery.

It is very important to maintain the fragile balance of the ecosystems and find sustainable ways of organising a balance between human influences and nature. For the area it is also important to encourage local economies for inhabitants to work against emigration.

References:

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