

The district of Regen in Bavaria (Germany)

Region, History, Inhabitants

2000 years ago (a.Chr.) the oldest traces of human beings were founded. The settlement in this region started in the 9th century from the monastery in Metten. In the year 1350 the first villages and glass huts were founded.

The region belongs to the Bavarian Forest and in the east is the border to the Czech Republic, in the south to Austria and in the west to the Danube. Its area has 975,07 square kilometres with about 82.000 inhabitants. 40 % of them live in the three cities Regen(12.500), Viechtach (8.500) and Zwiesel (10.500).

Countryside

This region is characterized of huge wood areas, its the biggest wood area (about 6000 square kilometres) in middle Europe and surely the most impressive. Mountains till 1500 metres (Arber), small rivers, mountain lakes, paths and fresh air give the impression of an intact nature. Within this region the first National Park of Germany is located, an area without any interference of people in natural processes. There is also a park with wild animals which are typical for this region.

Economy

63 % of the region is covered with wood, so it is mainly rurally structured with small farms and only few industry. The glass industry plays the most important role, besides there are nowadays also paper industry, textile industry and electronic industry. Tourism, especially for families with children, is also an important sector of the economy.

Problems

The rate of unemployment is about 10 % in this region. Therefore there are a lot of commuters who work in big cities nearby like Munich or in big factories like BMW in Regensburg or Dingolfing. In future they hope there will be a better development for the economy because of the EU expansion to the east. The region will be located in the heart of Europe then.

Another great problem is the destruction of the forest because of air pollution, sour rain and in the last years also because of the bark – beetle and the dry summers.

Sports and activities

The Great Arber is the highest mountain and one of the most famous tourist attractions in the Bavarian Forest (1456 metres). So in winter time you can do downhill skiing and crosscountry skiing, in summer you can go hiking and mountain biking. Also bathing pleasures and wellness are offered. Famous sport events are taking place in winter. For example FIS world cup races for women in giant slalom and slalom and biathlon races.

Way of life

Most of the population live in rural areas, so most of them are conservative and live a traditional cultural life. They speak local dialects in different regions.

