Dobrich District

▶ Population (2016)	179,520
▶ Area (sq. km)	4,719.7
▶ Number of settlements	215
▶ Share of urban population (%)	69.0
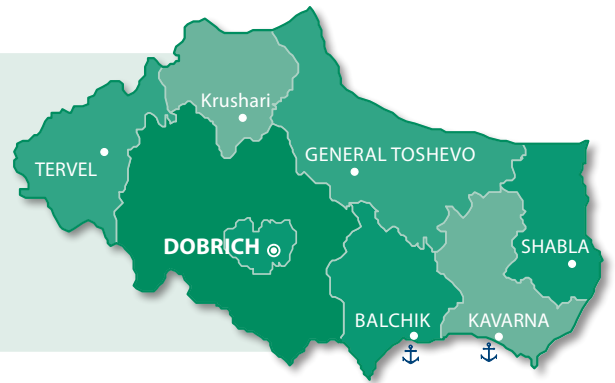
Overview

Although GDP as well as incomes and salaries in the district of Dobrich have kept growing, they have remained below national average figures. High employment and falling unemployment are due to the creation of new jobs. In comparison with the previous year investment activity is more intense, but is still catching up with national average figures. Despite the fact that there are resorts in the district the average real estate tax and the waste collection fee remain relatively low in it. The local administration is among the most transparent in the country; cadastral coverage is relatively high while the introduction of electronic government and one-stop shop services is making good progress. Population ageing in Dobrich is going fast. The educational system is unable to include a great part of those subject to education though its quality is close to the national average. The shortage of specialist doctors and the relatively limited access to hospital beds entail a hospitalization rate two times smaller than the national average. Administration of justice is relatively fast in the district. The intensity of cultural life is relatively low.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Weak   Unsatisfactory   Average   Good   Very good

Income and Living Conditions

Labor Market

Investment

Infrastructure

Taxes and Fees

Administration

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Weak   Unsatisfactory   Average   Good   Very good

Demography

Education

Healthcare

Security and Justice

Environment

Culture
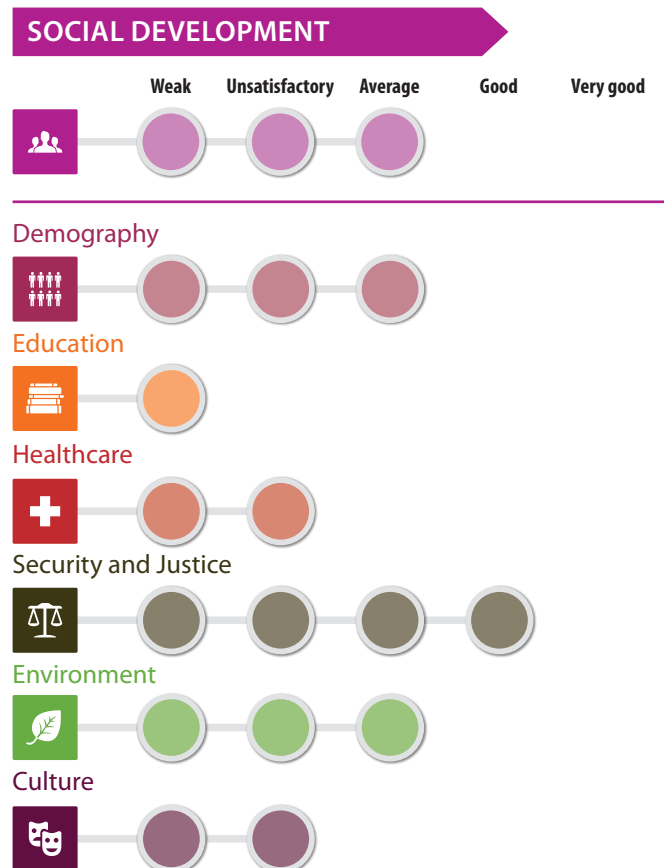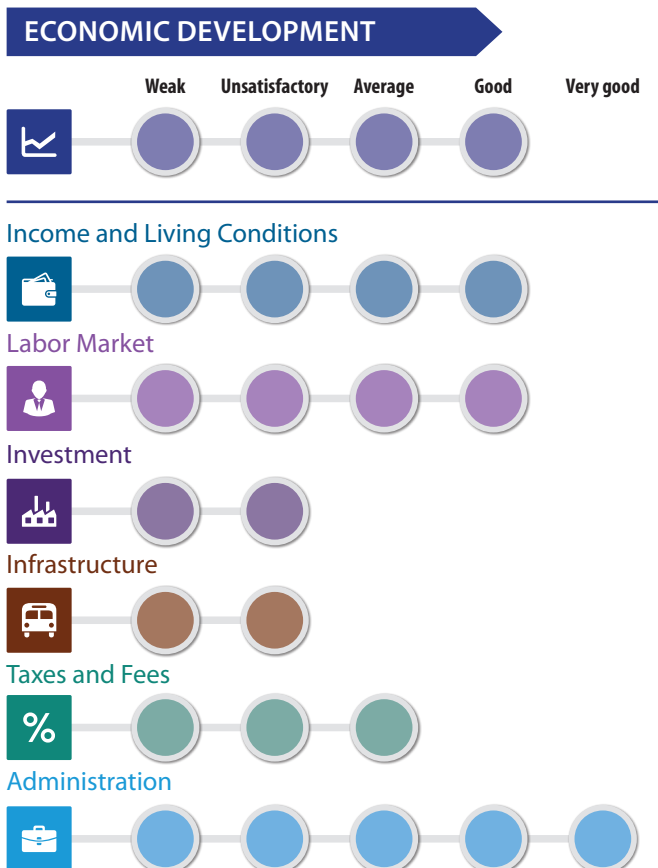
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●●●●

💼 Income and Living Conditions ●●●●

GDP per capita went on growing in the district of Dobrich but its growth was below average in 2015 with 8,002 BGN/person while the national average rate was 12,339 BGN/person. Salary growth was close to the national average rate while still staying below it: the district's annual average salary was 8,084 BGN (vs. 10,535 BGN on average for the country).

While the previous three years saw generally no change in household incomes, in 2016 they registered a considerable growth to reach 4,901 BGN per household member and came somewhat closer to the national average of 5,167 BGN per household member.

The share of people living in material deprivation as well as that of the poor in the district were still lower than the average rates in 2015.

👤 Labor Market ●●●●

After five years of growth, the economic activity in the district dropped for the second successive year in 2016 (69.2%) while still remaining above the national average of 68.7%.

Unemployment, too, went on decreasing to 9.5%, while staying above the national average rate of 7.7%. On the positive side, in 2016 this trend was accompanied by increasing employment, the rate of which reached 62.6%, its highest value for the last 15 years and approaching the national average rate.

The population's educational structure between ages 25 and 64 improved in 2016 but was still less favorable than it was in the country as a whole. The share of university graduates rose to 22.1% (vs. 27.7% nationally) and that of people with primary and lower education dropped to 21.0% (vs. 17.7% nationally).

🏭 Investment ●●

Investment activity in the district of Dobrich increased in 2015 compared to the previous year but it was still catching up with the national average values. There were 53 non-financial enterprises in the district per 1,000 people (vs. 55 per 1,000 people nationally) while the FTA acquisition expenses per capita rose slightly to reach 2,172 BGN/person but were still unable to compensate the drop from the crisis years.

What the district is most seriously lagging in is foreign investment per capita. In 2015 it grew almost twice the volume of 2014 (almost compensating for the drop in 2014) due to some large industrial projects. Yet, the cumulative level of 1,130 euro/person remained almost three times lower than the national average of 3,250 euro/person as of the end of 2015.

EU fund utilization in the district of Dobrich was also relatively low. The sums paid in the district as of 30th June 2017 amounted to 155 m BGN, or 865 BGN/person (vs. 1,344 BGN/person nationally). The largest sums were paid to the municipality of the city of Dobrich and that of Balchik but they, too, were below 800 BGN, hence below the national average.

🚊 Infrastructure ●●

The district's railroad density is considerably below the national average. Road density is similar to the national figure but the share of highways and first class roads remains low (10%) compared to the national average of 19%. Still, in 2016 the share of road surfaces in good condition was comparable to that in the country.

The relative share of households with Internet access as well as that of persons who had used it increased – approaching the average values for the country in 2016.

% Taxes and Fees ●●●

In 2017 the municipalities of Balchik and Kavarna raised some of the local tax and fee rates but on the whole there was no significant difference from 2016. The retail license tax remained considerably below national average levels. Despite the fact that there are resorts in the district, the property tax and the waste collection fee remained relatively low. The vehicle tax and property transfer tax were higher.

Dobrich is one of the districts with the lowest tax for taxi passenger transportation: in all its municipalities the annual tax is 300 BGN while the national average rate is 525 BGN.

💼 Administration ●●●●●

In 2017 the local administration again evaluated the development of electronic government and the availability of one-stop shop services considerably above the national average. The active transparency rating of local government in the district (66%) was also considerably higher than the national average of 59%. For one more successive year the most transparent municipal administrations were those of the city of Dobrich and that of Krushari (over 70%), while the least transparent one was Shabla (24%).

Dobrich was one of the few districts where all municipalities were covered by cadastral maps to some extent. In 2016 the share of covered territories remained 32.1% and though there was no improvement compared with 2009, it was still higher than the national average of 22.5%.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●●

Demography ●●●

In 2016 population ageing was going at a fast rate in the district and the age dependency ratio (the ratio of people aged 65+ to those aged 0–14) was higher than the national average ratio. The ageing of the local population was simultaneously due to a low birth rate and a high outmigration from the district. In 2016 the natural growth rate increased to −7.3% but was still lower than the national average rate of 6.0%, while the net migration rate kept dropping to reach −4.7%.

Following the general trend in the country, the urban population increased in Dobrich. Yet, it remained one of the districts with the lowest share of urban population: 69% while the national average was 73%, as well as the district with the lowest population density: 697 people/sq. km while the national average density was 1,548 people/sq. km.

Security and Justice ●●●●

The district of Dobrich is characterized by relatively speedy justice administration. In 2016 the share of criminal cases closed within 3 months rose to 95% (vs. 89% nationally) whereas pending cases dropped to under 4% (over 8% nationally). A possible explanation for this could be the relatively low workloads of judges in the district: a criminal judge in the district saw an average of 6.7 cases a month (vs. 9.4 cases nationally).

In 2016 Dobrich also registered its highest increase in the crime clearance rate: by almost 20 p.p. compared with 2015, to reach 56% (vs. 48% on average in the country). The rate of registered crimes (12.0 per 1,000 people), on the other hand, was once again close to the average national rate of 12.6 per 1,000 people.

Education ●

The district's performance in this category positioned it at the bottom of the national ranking; only the district of Sliven did worse.

Dobrich went on being the district with the lowest net enrolment rate in 5th–8th grade; after a new drop in 2016 to 68.3% (vs. 78.2% nationally) it went on being the only district with a rate under 70%. The shares of dropouts and repeaters in primary and secondary education in the district remained almost twice the national average rates.

On the other hand, school leavers in the district once again performed relatively well at the matriculation exams in 2017. The average grade at the exam in BLL was 4.16 (vs. 4.22 nationally) while poor grades were 4.3% (vs. 8% nationally).

Environment ●●●

Dobrich remains one of the districts with the lowest carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere: dozens of times lower than national average figures per territory. Household waste, on the other hand, is still above average levels which can partly be accounted for by the resorts located in the district.

The positive evaluation of the district in this category was influenced by the relatively high share of population with access to sewerage systems and its connectivity to wastewater treatment plants: 70.7% (vs. 62.3% nationally). Yet, despite the fact that the entire sewerage network in the district is connected with wastewater treatment plants, the number of people with access to sewerage (70.7%) was still relatively small compared with the national average rate of 75.5% in 2015.

Healthcare ●●

The share of health-insured people in the district remained relatively low: 85% (vs. 88% nationally) in 2016. Dobrich was still among the districts with the acutest specialist shortage. There were 826 people per specialist (vs. 530 nationally); the number of hospital beds increased but remained considerably below average: 2.7 beds per 1,000 people in the district vs. 5.1 beds per 1,000 people nationwide.

The shortage of specialist doctors and the limited number of hospital beds entailed a hospitalization rate twice lower than the national average rate. In 2016 there were 126 hospitalizations per 1,000 people (vs. 235 per 1,000 people nationally).

Culture ●●

After continuously dropping in the last few years, in 2016 museum visits in the district were on the rise again and placed Dobrich among the first five of the districts with the highest interest in local museums (over 1,400 visits per 1,000 people).

At the same time, theater visits went on dropping, whereas interest in local libraries was revived. However, the district remained way below national average rates in both indicators.

Dobrich registered an almost double increase in cinema visits: from 120 per 1,000 people in 2015 to 219 per 1,000 people in 2016, though that figure was still way below the national average rate of 778 per 1,000 people.

Key Indicators for the District of Dobrich

Indicators of economic development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	7,273	7,489	7,788	7,827	8,002	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	2,994	3,856	4,166	4,091	4,049	4,901
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	6,394	6,738	7,164	7,581	8,084	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	23.0	20.0	19.9	16.8	17.8	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	66.0	69.0	70.7	71.5	70.8	69.2
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	54.4	58.3	59.4	61.2	60.9	62.6
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	17.3	15.4	15.8	14.3	13.8	9.5
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	18.4	18.3	18.4	18.4	19.4	22.1
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	48	48	51	51	53	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	1,975	1,756	2,052	2,026	2,172	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	1,236	1,398	1,616	607	1,130	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	36.2	49.7	54.1	49.6	58.5	65.6
Share of roads in good condition (%)	45.2	46.0	45.8	39.3	40.0	42.1
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	32.1	32.1	32.1	32.1	32.1	32.1

Indicators of social development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rate of natural increase (‰)	−5.7	−6.8	−6.7	−7.4	−8.5	−7.3
Net migration rate (‰)	−3.7	−2.5	−2.8	−2.8	−3.7	−4.7
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.41	4.21	4.29	4.29	4.26	4.25
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	2.63	3.20	4.10	2.89	2.85	3.78
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	83.4	81.8	79.2	76.4	74.6	68.3
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	86.6	85.4	84.0	84.6	85.9	85.3
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	131.5	136.5	134.1	134.5	128.5	125.5
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	13.0	12.6	13.5	13.7	13.1	12.0
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	39.4	38.4	35.2	32.8	36.5	56.0
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	7.4	7.3	7.2	11.2	7.0	3.6
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	69.4	70.7	70.8	70.9	70.7	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/sq. km)	20.2	4.3	5.2	5.9	4.8	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	65	24	28	125	120	219
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	214	205	245	261	240	232