Veliko Tarnovo District

▶ Population (2016) — 243,633

▶ Area (sq. km) — 4,661.6

▶ Number of settlements — 337

▶ Share of urban population (%) — 70.1

SVISHTOV
POLSKI TRAMBESH
PAVLIKENI
STRAZHITSA
SUHINDOL
GORNA ORYAHOVITSA
VELIKO TARNOVO ◎
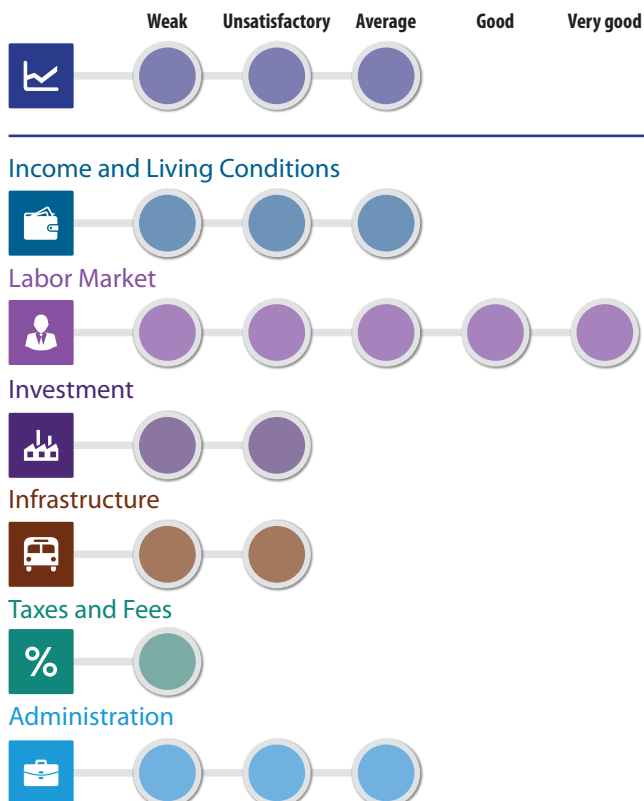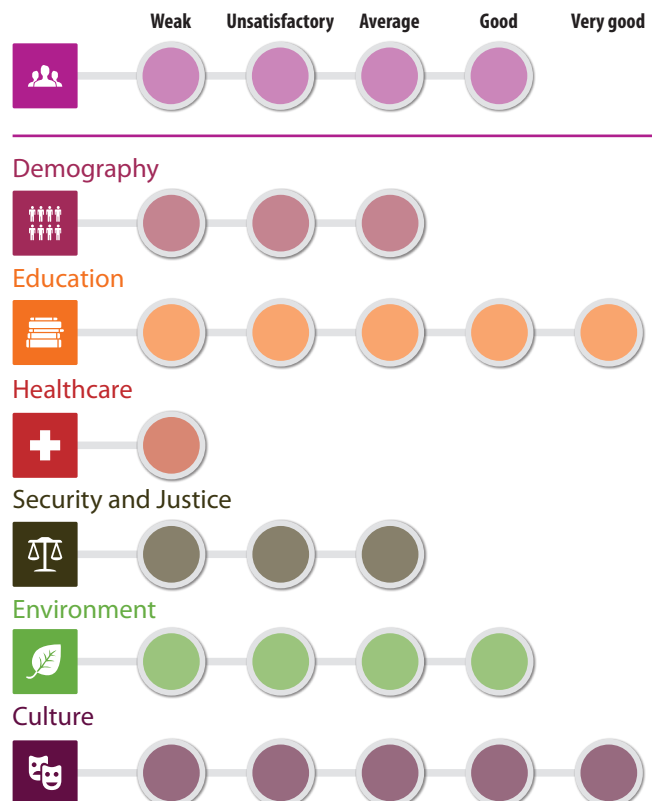LYASKOVETS
ZLATARITSA
ELENA

Overview

GDP per capita as well as the gross annual average salary in the district grew at rates close to the national average ones but their values stayed considerably lower. The reason for the relatively high employment and the low unemployment in the district can be sought in the relatively good educational structure of the population. The district has been lagging considerably behind national average figures in the indicators for entrepreneurship and investment. The average rates of local taxes and fees in the district's municipalities place Veliko Tarnovo among the districts with the highest rates.

The district's demographic picture has undergone serious deterioration. Indicators on the state of education have placed the district in the third position after the capital and the district of Smolyan. On the other hand, the state of healthcare in the district is among the worst. Veliko Tarnovo is one of the districts with the highest clearance crime rate, though the speedy administration of justice is below the national average. The wealth of historical heritage sites has placed Veliko Tarnovo among the districts with the richest cultural life.

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 ●●●

Both GDP per capita and the annual average salary in the district of Veliko Tarnovo grew at rates similar to national average ones in 2015 compared to 2014 though their values were considerably lower. GDP per capita reached 8,288 BGN (vs. 12,339 BGN nationally), and the average annual gross salary rose to 8,213 BGN (vs. 10,535 BGN nationally).

Household incomes rose abruptly in 2016 and the gap from the national average levels shrank considerably. Still, average income per household member in the district stayed below national average figures: 4,967 BGN vs. 5,167 BGN nationally.

The share of people living in material deprivation as well as that of people below the national poverty line retained relatively high levels.

Labor Market ●●●●●

In 2016, the economic activity in the country dropped after having been on the rise for several years in succession but the upward trend continued in the district of Veliko Tarnovo and it overtook most other districts. That brought about a rise in unemployment in the district (7.6%), though it remained close to the national average level of 7.7%. Employment retained its level of 65.0%, while staying above the average 63.4%.

The relatively high employment and low unemployment rates might be rooted in the good educational structure of the district's population. The share of university graduates among the population aged 25–64 grew and was comparable to the average values in the country, while that of people with primary or lower education shrank to 14.3% vs. the national average of 17.7% in 2016.

The ageing population remained problematic for the labor market. The demographic replacement ratio as a ratio of the population aged 15–19 to that aged 60–64 was 56.2% while the national average was 62.8%, the implication being that for every 100 people about to leave the labor market in the coming years there are 56 youngsters to take their place.

Investment ●●

The district has been lagging considerably behind national average figures in the indicators for entrepreneurship and investment. In 2015, the number of enterprises once again rose at slower rates than the ones in the country to reach 43 per 1,000 people in the district vs. 55 per 1,000 people nationally. The FTA acquisition expenditures rose considerably relative to the population in 2015 but remained at about 1/3 of the national average values. Foreign investment on the other hand was over 6 times lower: 500 euro/

person cumulative as of the end of 2015 (vs. 3,250 euro/person nationally).

The district was also lagging in EU fund utilization. As of 30th June 2017 beneficiaries from operational funds in the district were paid 1,157 BGN/person (vs. 1,344 BGN nationally). The municipalities that utilized the most funds were Svishtov and Veliko Tarnovo, whereas Suhindol and Polski Trumbesh utilized least funds. The latter two were among the ten municipalities in Bulgaria that utilized less than 100 BGN/person.

Infrastructure ●●

Road and railroad network density is higher in the district than the national average but the share of highways and first class roads has been lagging behind: in 2016, it was 16.3% while the national average was 18.6%. That is one of the possible explanations of the low share of roads in good condition: 25.4% vs. the national average of 41.5%.

Both household access to the Internet and the share of people who have used the Internet in the last 12 months registered a small drop compared to 2015. Yet its levels were still comparable to national average figures.

% Taxes and Fees ●

The average rates of local taxes and fees in the district's municipalities place the district fourth in the country with highest rates after the capital, Varna, and Burgas. All monitored local taxes and fees in the district have higher average levels than the average rates in the country except for the annual license tax for retailers and the taxi transportation tax. Veliko Tarnovo is one of the districts with the highest tax rates on vehicles from 74 to 110 kW and the highest rate of the tax on immovable property of legal entities.

What is more, in 2017 a number of municipalities in the district raised the rates of local taxes and fees.

Administration ●●●

In 2017 Veliko Tarnovo was once again among the districts with relatively high transparency of local government institutions. The administration's rating for the development of electronic government in the district's municipalities also rose and stayed above the national average but one-stop shop services lagged behind.

Cadastral map coverage in the district remained twice lower than the national average: 11% compared to 23% nationally. Only the municipality of Zlataritsa had full coverage while the municipalities of Lyaskovets and Strazhitsa continued to have 0% coverage. The only improvement in 2016 compared to 2015 was registered in the municipality of the city of Veliko Tarnovo.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●●●

Demography ●●●

The district's demographic picture has seriously deteriorated. The age dependency ratio as a ratio between the population aged 65+ and that aged 0–14 rose in 2016 to 180% while the national average was 147%. The natural growth rate had a slight rise in 2016, though it retained its relatively low value of –8‰ vs. the national average of –6‰. The net migration rate also remained negative.

A comparatively small share of the district's population lives in towns: 70.1% (vs. 73.3% nationally), which explains the lower population density of 1,093 people/sq. km (compared to the national average figure of 1,543 people/sq. km).

Education ●●●●●

The indicators measuring the state of education in the district place Veliko Tarnovo third in the country – after the capital and the district of Smolyan. In 2016 again, the district was the leader in number of university students relative to the population (90 per 1,000 people) though the number of students has been going down for another successive year – a tendency characteristic of the entire country.

The district's enrolment rate in 5th–8th grade fell, but remained close to the national average. The number of dropouts from primary and secondary education also dropped. In 2016 the district succeeded in attracting a considerable number of teachers in primary and secondary education and their number reached 85 per 1,000 students while it was 75 per 1,000 nationally. The average grade at the matriculation exam in BLL for high school graduates in the district rose to a level commensurate with the national average grade in 2017.

Healthcare ●

Healthcare indicators rank the district of Veliko Tarnovo among the worst performers – only Yambol and Targovishte are behind it.

Veliko Tarnovo is among the districts with the worst shortage of doctors. One GP takes care of 1,743 people (vs. 1,611 on average in the country). In 2016 one specialist was responsible for 704 people (vs. 530 nationally). In addition, the share of health-insured people was still one of the lowest in the country: 84% vs. the national average of 88%.

The relative share of hospital beds and that of hospitalizations in the district were also relatively low. There were 3.1 beds in general hospitals per 1,000 population (vs. 5.1 per

1,000 people nationally) and hospitalizations were 155 per 1,000 people (vs. 235 per 1,000 nationally) in 2016.

Security and Justice ●●●

Though the workloads of criminal judges at the district court were considerably lower than they were in the country as a whole, namely, one judge saw 7 cases a month on average while the national average figure was 9 cases a month, the speed of justice administration was below the national average. The share of criminal cases closed within 3 months remained 91% in Veliko Tarnovo while it was 89% in the country but the share of pending cases rose to 10% (vs. 8% nationally).

Veliko Tarnovo was among the districts with the highest crime clearance rate in 2016. From all the registered crimes over 65% were cleared (vs. 48% nationally). The registered crime rate remained below average: 11.1 crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people (vs. 12.6 per 1,000 people nationally).

Environment ●●●●

Air pollution dropped dramatically in 2015 to reach 46.6 t/sq. km carbon dioxide emissions, considerably below the national average of 323.8 t/sq. km. Generated household waste also stayed below average.

The district's relatively low urbanization explains the lower availability of sewerage systems to the population. Still, this indicator, as well as the connectivity to wastewater treatment plants increased in 2015 to approach national average rates.

Culture ●●●●●

The rich historical and cultural heritage in the district ranked it second after Gabrovo in visits to the local museums with 1,945 visits per 1,000 people (vs. 734 per 1,000 nationally) in 2016. The district ranks a decisive first in library visits. With 2,277 visits per 1,000 people it marks a huge difference from the national average of 605 per 1,000 people – almost four times more.

In 2016, theater visits in the district increased to reach 125 per 1,000 people but remained below the national average of 322 per 1,000 people. Cinema visits in the district were 338 per 1,000 people or almost half the national average in 2016.

Key Indicators for the District of Veliko Tarnovo

Indicators of economic development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	7,145	7,415	7,802	7,832	8,288	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	3,648	4,043	4,385	4,288	4,180	4,967
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	6,488	6,742	7,262	7,662	8,213	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	24.5	18.5	30.2	24.4	30.8	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	61.6	63.9	65.5	68.1	69.8	70.3
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	54.3	55.0	54.8	60.0	65.0	65.0
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	11.7	13.8	16.2	11.7	6.8	7.6
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	21.5	23.5	26.6	27.3	26.9	27.3
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	39	40	40	41	43	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	1,516	1,482	1,576	1,541	2,056	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	284	331	355	434	500	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	45.0	41.0	46.6	55.0	60.7	56.9
Share of roads in good condition (%)	30.2	23.6	25.7	27.7	26.7	25.4
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.7	10.4	11.0

Indicators of social development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rate of natural increase (‰)	−7.9	−7.9	−6.9	−8.2	−8.2	−8.0
Net migration rate (‰)	−2.0	−3.0	−2.7	−5.2	−3.1	−3.3
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.38	4.19	4.27	4.24	4.24	4.10
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	5.62	6.16	6.61	5.46	6.20	8.56
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	82.3	81.4	80.6	78.7	78.2	77.7
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	84.2	83.3	82.2	83.1	84.5	84.2
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	138.9	142.2	146.9	149.4	146.4	155.2
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	14.2	13.2	11.8	10.7	11.4	11.1
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	58.4	62.5	61.6	60.1	57.5	65.4
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	8.4	8.6	7.4	8.0	9.5	10.0
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	43.9	44.2	44.5	44.8	61.7	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/sq. km)	157.2	119.2	148.6	131.1	46.6	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	376	340	396	471	444	338
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	67	102	123	122	71	125