

Haskovo district

- ▶ Population (2021)
- ▶ Territory (sq. km)
- ▶ Number of settlements
- ▶ Share of urban population (%)

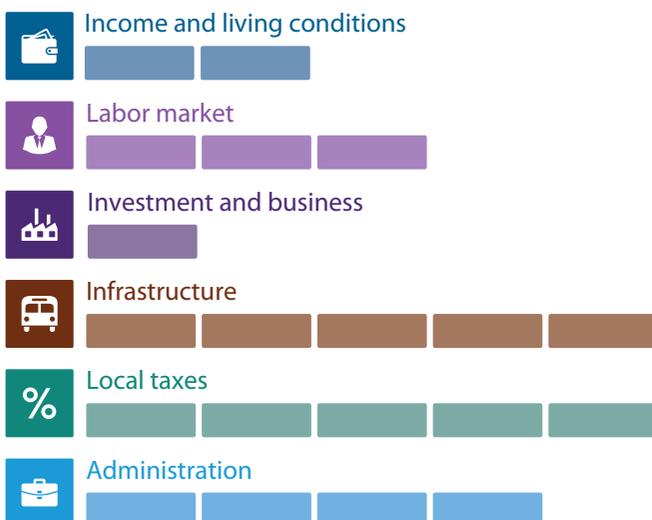
211,565
5,533
261
72.2



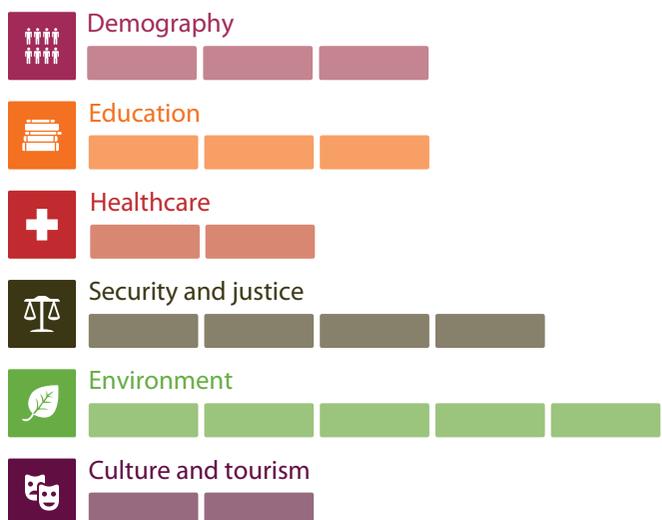
Both the value and the growth rate of GDP per capita in Haskovo district are low. Poverty is declining but is still relatively high. Employment and unemployment are both increasing. Investment activity in the district remains slack. The density of the road and railway networks in the district is above the national average. Local tax rates in the district's municipalities are close to, but below the respective averages countrywide. The self-assessments of the local administrations on the development of e-government have recorded a further increase and have settled above the country's average.

The district's rate of natural population growth is relatively low and the trend towards population aging is continuing. Students' results are low. Healthcare in Haskovo district suffers from a shortage of doctors and hospital beds. Morbidity and infant mortality are relatively low and life expectancy is high. The workloads of the criminal judges are not high, but this does not reflect on the speed of delivery of justice. Haskovo district ranks among the top three in the category assessing the environment. Cultural life and tourism in the district have a relatively weak presence.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and living conditions

In 2021, both the value and the growth rate of GDP per capita in Haskovo district were low. GDP grew by only 8%, compared to 17% in the country, and its value is now the lowest in the country – 9,800 BGN, versus 20,200 BGN in the country. Salaries and pensions are increasing, but also at a slow pace. The average annual gross salary of people employed in a labor or service contract in 2021 was 12,900 BGN, versus 18,700 BGN in the country. The average monthly pension is 521 BGN, against 537 BGN nationally.

The Gini coefficient for income inequality in the district was again relatively low in 2022. Poverty is declining but remains relatively high, with 30.2% of the population living below the national poverty line, compared to 22.9% nationally.

Labor market

The share of the working-age population in the district is decreasing and remains relatively low at 56.3%, compared to 58.5% in the country. Economic activity is increasing, but also remains low with a rate of 69.2%, versus 73.6% nationally. This increase has been accompanied by a rise in both employment and unemployment. The employment rate has reached 68.5%, compared to the national average of 70.4%, and the unemployment rate is 6.4%, against 5.2% in the country.

The local labor market continues to face the challenge posed by the educational structure of the workforce and the aging population. The share of university graduates among the 25–64 age group was 18.6% in 2022, compared to 29.6% in the country, and the share of people with primary or lower education is 20.1%, compared to the national average of 16.0%. The population replacement rate as a ratio of the population aged 15–19 to those aged 60–64 has decreased to 63.5%, compared to 65.7% in the country. This means that for every 100 people who are about to leave the labor market in the next few years, there will be 64 young people joining the workforce.

Investment and business

Investment activity in Haskovo district again remained slack in 2021. The number of non-financial enterprises in the district was 52 per 1,000 population, compared to 60 per 1,000 population in the country. FTA acquisition expenditures went up but nevertheless remained low at 1,400 BGN/person, compared to 3,100 BGN/person nationally. FDI stock decreased for a second year in a row to 614 EUR/person and also remained considerably below the national average of 4,100 EUR/person. These indicator values also account for the relatively limited production value, in spite of a considerable increase compared to the year before.

Utilization of EU funds is also relatively low. By 30 June 2023, payments made in the district to beneficiaries of EU operational programs amounted to 1,910 BGN/person, which is half the national average of 2,836 BGN/person. Within the district, the highest amounts were utilized by the municipality of Svilengrad.

Infrastructure

The density of the road and railway network in Haskovo district is above the national average. The share of first-class roads and highways is also higher than the national average – 21.5%, compared to 18.5% in the country in 2022. The quality of the roads has been improving, but remains below the country's average. The share of road surfaces in good condition was 39.5% in 2022, compared to 41.1% countrywide.

Households' access to the internet in the district increased in 2022 to 91.8%, versus 87.3% in the country.

Local taxes

In 2023, the levels of the monitored local taxes in the municipalities on the district's territory again remained close to, though below the national average. The taxes on immovable non-residential property for legal entities and motor vehicles were practically equal to the respective national averages. Lower than the average ones were the tax rates on retail trade (12.84 BGN/sq. m, versus 13.04 BGN/sq. m in the country), on non-gratuitous acquisition of property (2.61%, against 2.76% nationally) and on taxi transportation (312 BGN, compared to 471 BGN countrywide). Within the district, the lowest local taxes are levied by the municipalities of Simeonovgrad and Ivaylovgrad, and the highest – by those of Madzharovo and Haskovo city.

Administration

In 2023, the self-assessment of the district's municipalities on the development of e-government continued to rise and has now settled above the national average. The self-assessment on the provision of one-stop shop administrative services was also relatively high. The AIP Active transparency rating of the local administrations remained above the national average – 72.4% in the district, versus 70.3% in the country.

The share of own revenues in the municipalities' total revenues in 2022 was 24.5%, compared to 29.0% in the country, and the coverage of municipal expenditures with local revenues – 72.6%, compared to 84.2% in the country.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Demography

The natural population growth in the district is relatively low at -12.6% , compared to -9.7% nationally. The net migration rate is also negative at -1.5% .

The trend towards population ageing in the district is continuing. In 2022, the population replacement rate as a ratio of the population aged 65+ to those aged 0–14 reached 179.7%, compared to 165.9% in the country, and to those aged 15–64 it was 42.0%, against 37.7% in the country.

The share of urban population is comparable to the country's average – 72.2%, versus 73.6% nationally. At the same time, population density is relatively low – 968 persons/sq. km, compared to 1,404 persons/sq. km nationally.

Education

The coverage of the education system has improved but is nevertheless lagging further behind the national average, which has been growing at a faster rate. In 2022, the net enrolment in 5th–7th grade was 86.1%, against 90.7% nationally. The share of school year repeaters is above the national average, albeit slightly. The alignment between vocational education and the profile of the local economy is at a relatively high level due to the high share of both students and employees with vocational qualifications in the manufacturing sector and their low share in construction.

Students' results again remained low in 2023. The average score in the NEA in mathematics after 7th grade was 31.5 points, versus 35.3 points in the country. The average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature was "Good" 3.72, compared to 3.93 in the country. The share of "fail" grades (below 3.00) has recorded a significant decrease, though remaining relatively high – 22.2%, against 17.9% nationally.

Healthcare

The healthcare system in Haskovo district suffers from a shortage of doctors and hospital beds. The number of doctors – both GPs and specialist physicians – is below the national average. There is one GP per 1,849 people, compared to 1,678 people per doctor nationally. The number of beds in the district's general hospitals remains extremely low, with 3.8 beds per 1,000 people, compared to 5.9 beds per 1,000 people in the country. Population morbidity and infant mortality in the district are relatively low, and life expectancy – relatively high. The average life expectancy is 72.5 years, against 71.9 years nationwide. The number of hospitalizations is 165 per 1,000 people, compared to the national average of 235 per 1,000 people in the country, which suggests that the population may be seeking health care outside the district, given the limited number of doctors and hospital beds.

The number of people with health insurance continued to increase in 2022 and now equals the national average of 93.5%.

The number of people with health insurance increased slightly in 2021 and remains above the national average – 89.6% in the district, against 88.7% in the country.

Security and justice

The workloads of criminal judges in the district again remained low in 2021, with an average of 8.6 cases a month per one local judge, compared to the national average of 10.1 cases per judge. This, however, does not reflect on the speed of delivery of justice. The relative share of criminal cases closed within 3 months increased slightly to 89%, thus equaling the national average, while the share of pending cases remained unchanged at 9.0%, against 12% countrywide.

The number of crimes in Haskovo district has gone up, but remains below the national average, while the detection rate is considerably higher. In 2022, the registered crimes against the person and property amounted to 10.5 per 1,000 population, compared to 11.6 per 1,000 population nationally. The proportion of cleared crimes was 60%, against 49% nationally.

Environment

Haskovo district ranks among the country's top three (after Smolyan and Pazardzhik) in the environment category. Its high assessment is mainly due to the relatively low volumes of generated household waste and their management. In 2021, the annual amount of generated waste was 319 kg/person, compared to the national average of 445 kg/person, while 98% of all generated household waste was handed over for treatment and recycling, compared to 74% in the country.

There has been little change in the share of households with access to a public sewerage network, which in 2021 was 71.3%, against 74.8% in the country. The share of households whose sewerage system is connected to a wastewater treatment plant was 53.2%, compared to 66.8% countrywide.

The share of forest areas is close to the national average – 32% in the district, compared to 33% in the country, but degraded land is significantly more limited – 0.15% in the district, compared to 0.43% in the country in 2021.

Culture and tourism

Cultural life in Haskovo district has a relatively minor presence. Although after the serious decline of 2020, caused by the pandemic-induced restrictions, in 2021 the country recorded an increase in the attendance to cultural events, in Haskovo district some of the indicators even showed a decline. Cinema visits dropped to 51 per 1,000 people, against 590 per 1,000 people nationally, and visits to the local libraries also decreased to 211 per 1,000 people, against 584 per 1,000 people in the country.

Tourism is also not particularly intensive, although Haskovo is the district with the highest share of employees in the culture, sports and entertainment sector – 2.41%, compared to 1.02% in the country. The number of beds in accommodation facilities in the district is 13 per 1,000 people, versus 55 per 1,000 people in the country, and the number of overnight stays – 900 per 1,000 people (vs. 3,739 per 1,000 people in the country).

Key indicators for the district of Haskovo

Economic Development Indicators	2020	2021	2022	National average
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (BGN, current prices)	9,100	9,817	n.a.	20,212
Average gross annual salary of people employed in a labor or service contract (BGN)	11,642	12,906	n.a.	18,733
Share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	38.9	32.9	30.2	22.9
Share of the working-age population (%)	57.9	58.1	56.3	58.5
Average annual employment rate of the population aged 15–64 (%)	67.4	66.3	68.5	70.4
Average annual unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	7.7	5.7	6.4	5.2
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education (%)	25.8	19.9	20.1	16.0
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with higher education (%)	17.8	18.5	18.6	29.8
Production value per capita (BGN)	11,793	14,447	n.a.	31,242
Expenditures on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	1,230	1,399	n.a.	3,097
Foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises per capita (cumulative) (EUR)	794	614	n.a.	4,098
Share of households with broadband internet access (%)	78.6	81.1	91.8	87.3
Share of road surfaces in good condition (%)	36.0	38.9	39.5	41.1
Coverage of municipal expenditures with local revenues (%)	80.8	79.8	72.6	84.2
Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies (%)*	73.7	72.2	72.4	70.3

Social Development Indicators	2020	2021	2022	National average
Natural population growth rate (‰)	n.a.	n.a.	-12.6	-9.7
Net migration rate (‰)	n.a.	n.a.	-1.5	4.2
Average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	4.00	3.62	3.72	3.93
Average grade in the National external assessment in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	32.4	29.4	31.5	35.3
Net enrolment rate of the population (5th to 7th grade) (%)	84.9	85.6	86.1	90.7
Average life expectancy (years)***	74.3	73.1	72.5	71.9
Share of people with health insurance (%)	89.2	89.6	93.5	93.5
Population per one GP (persons)	1,871	1,932	1,849	1,678
Crimes against the person and property per 1,000 population	9.9	9.1	10.5	11.6
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	13.5	9.0	8.9	11.6
Share of the population living in settlements with a public sewerage network (%)	72.3	71.3	n.a.	74.8
Generated household waste per capita of serviced population (kg/person/year)	303	319	n.a.	445
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	99.4	98.3	n.a.	74.0
Visits to cinemas (number/1,000 population)	13	91	51	590
Overnight stays in accommodation facilities (number/1,000 population)	372	501	900	3,739

* The 2022 data are included in the 2023 study. The same is valid for the previous years.

** The data refer to the 2022-23 academic year, while the State matriculation exams took place in 2023. The same is valid for the previous years.

*** Data are for three-year periods and are updated annually.