

Targovishte District

► Population (2015)	115,816
► Area (sq. km)	2,558.5
► Number of settlements	199
► Share of urban population (%)	53.7

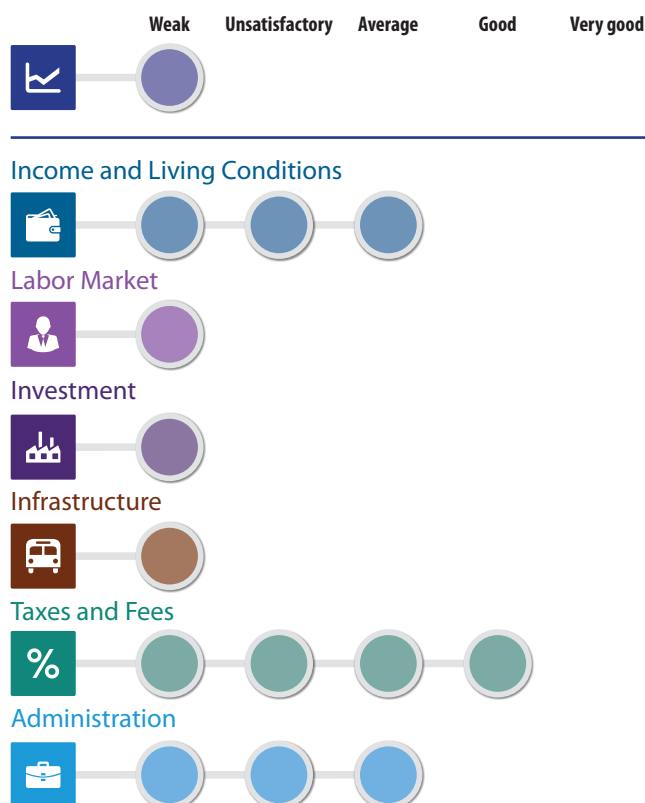


Overview

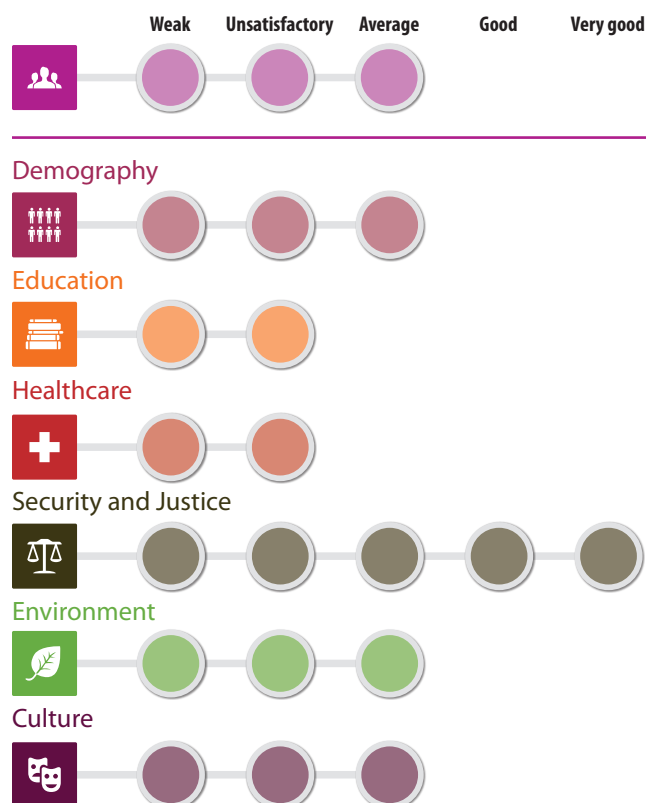
GDP growth and its per capita value have been lagging in the district compared to national trends. In 2015, the population's economic activity in the district also continued to decrease. Targovishte was the district with the lowest activity in the labor market. All these factors have predetermined the relatively low living standard in the district. Targovishte is also among the districts with relatively low business activity, relatively low investment, and relatively poor utilization of EU funds. On the whole, local tax and fee rates were below national average levels. Cadastral map coverage is limited in

the district, while the transparency of the local administration was rated below the national average. Almost half the district's population lives in villages, and the ratio between seniors over 65 and children is deteriorating rapidly. In the healthcare category the most serious problem is the shortage of doctors. The workloads of criminal judges in the district of Targovishte remain the lowest in the country, which is also due to the low rate of registered crimes. Targovishte is also the district with the highest clearance crime rate.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●

Income and Living Conditions ●●●

After four years of uninterrupted growth, in 2014, GDP in the district dropped by almost 4%. GDP per capita also shrank in 2014 to 7,113 BGN per capita, which is considerably below the national level of 11,574 BGN per capita. Despite the decline in GDP, salaries in the district went on rising, and in 2014 their growth rate compared to 2009 was above the country average. Still, the level of salaries remained below average by about 30%.

Household incomes also have been rising. In 2015, Targovishte was the district with the highest growth rate of the annual average income per household member compared to 2009: 65% vs. the national average of 34%. Still, incomes were below average incomes in Bulgaria (3,910 BGN per capita in the district and 4,953 BGN per capita nationwide), while salaries formed less than half of the gross income: 49% vs. 57% for the country.

Low incomes have predetermined the high share of people living below the national poverty line: 29.7% in the district vs. 21.8% in the country in 2013.

Labor Market ●

In 2015, unemployment was dropping rapidly in the district, reaching levels below the national average: the unemployment rate for that year was 8.8% (vs. 9.1% nationally). Employment rates, on the other hand, have remained slightly over 51%, the second lowest in the country (after Silistra). That means that the majority of the previously unemployed did not find jobs but simply left the workforce. Economic activity went on declining for the fourth successive year in 2015. Targovishte was the district with the least active workforce in Bulgaria: 56.7% vs. 69.3% nationally. Low employment and economic activity can partly be explained with the deteriorated educational structure of the population. In 2015, the share of the population aged 25 to 64 with higher education in the district dropped to become the lowest in the country, 15% vs. 27.5% for the country. At the same time, Targovishte was among the districts with the highest share of low-qualified population judging by the share of people with primary or lower education: 35.7% vs. 18.1% in the country in 2015.

Investment ●

In 2014, Targovishte was among the districts with the lowest number of non-financial enterprises relative to the population: 32 per 1,000 people, a sign of limited investment and entrepreneurial activity. FTA acquisition expenditures were also relatively low and even declined compared to 2013, while towards the end of 2014 FDI relative to the population was almost half the national average.

Targovishte was one of the five districts which had been paid the smallest sums as beneficiaries from operational programs per capita as of 31 May 2016. The municipality with the least utilized EU funds was Antonovo, while Popovo had utilized the most.

Infrastructure ●

Though the road network density in the district of Targovishte was above the national average, the share of first class roads is lower. Road surface quality declined in 2015, too, but was still above national average levels.

In addition, a decline in internet access and usage was registered in 2015. That made Targovishte the district with the second lowest share of households with internet access (33.8% in the district vs. 59.1% in the country) and the district with the lowest share of people aged 16 to 74 to have used the internet in the previous year (22.2% in the district vs. 60.3% in the country).

Taxes and Fees ●●●●

In 2016, the municipality of Opaka raised the rates of all monitored taxes and fees, while the municipality of Antonovo raised four of them. There were no changes in the remaining municipalities.

On the whole, the rate of local taxes and fees in the district of Targovishte was again below the national average level in 2016. From the monitored local rates the only exception was the vehicle tax where the average level of the district's municipalities was a little higher.

The greatest variance from national average rates was noticeable in the license tax for retailers, which was highest in Targovishte and Omurtag, and lowest in Opaka and Popovo.

Administration ●●●

The self-rating of municipalities in the district of Targovishte for development of electronic government remained above the national average ratings, and it rose in 2016. However, the rating for the offering of one-stop shop services dropped and was considerably below the national average level in 2016.

Cadastral map coverage did not increase in 2015 and remained 6.0% (vs. 19.8% nationally) for the seventh year in succession. The municipalities of Opaka and Antonovo still had 0% coverage.

The local administrations' transparency was also rated by the AIP foundation below average for the country: 50.9% (vs. 54.2% nationally) in 2016. The highest rating in the district was given to the municipality of Targovishte (58.2%), and the lowest – to the municipality of Opaka (24.6%).

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●●●

Demography ●●●●

The relatively low natural growth and the high intensity of out-migration among the district's population have continued to deteriorate the demographic picture of Targovishte. During the last decade, the ratio of age dependence as a ratio of persons over 65 to children under 14 grew faster than the national average growth to reach 140.1%, though it remained beneath the national average of 146.4%.

The district of Targovishte continues to be the district with the lowest share of urban population and with the lowest population density. In 2015, 53.7% lived in towns (vs. 73.1% on average in Bulgaria).

Education ●●

Targovishte is one of the five districts without higher education institutions; school education suffers from numerous weaknesses. The population's enrolment rate in 5th–8th grade shrank fast to reach 77.5% in 2015 (vs. 78.3% for the country). The share of dropouts from primary and secondary education rose to 4.9%, the second highest figure in the country and considerably above the country average level of 2.8%. The number of repeaters dropped to 0.8%, though, and was below the national average level of 1.0% in 2015.

The average grade at matriculation exams in Bulgarian language and literature in 2016 in the district of Targovishte was "good" 3.98 (it dropped from "good" 4.06 in 2015) while the national average grade was "good" 4.17.

Healthcare ●●

In the healthcare category, the most acute problem in the district is the shortage of doctors. Targovishte held the third place among all 28 districts with the lowest number of general practitioners relative to the population. In 2015, there were 2,227 people per GP in the district while that number was 1,619 in Bulgaria. The number of people per specialist doctor was 738 (vs. 544 nationally).

The share of health-insured people rose to 88.2% but remained below the average level for the country in 2015. The number of hospital beds and hospitalizations in the district relative to the population continued to be similar to the national average figures for 2015.

Security and Justice ●●●●●●

The workloads of criminal judges in the district court in Targovishte have remained the lowest in the country. In 2015, it declined to reach 3.3 cases per judge per month (vs. 8.3 cases per month nationally). That could be explained with the low crime rate in 2015 again. Targovishte remained among the districts with the smallest number of registered crimes against the person and property relative to the population: 8.8 per 1,000 people vs. 13.6 per 1,000 people nationally. The judges' low workloads also play a role for the speedy closure of cases. In 2015, 92.0% of cases in the district were closed within three months (vs. 88.1% nationally) and 8.1% of cases were pending (vs. 9.4% nationally). In 2015, Targovishte became the district with the highest share of cleared crimes from those registered during the year: 63.2% vs. 39.2% in the country.

Environment ●●●●

Relatively few people in the district have access to public sewerage and to WWTP connectivity in the district, which is typical of districts with low degree of urbanization and low population density. In 2014, 56.4% of the population in Targovishte district lived in areas with public sewerage systems vs. 74.9% in the country; 44.1% (unchanged from the previous three years) had access to sewerage systems connected to WWTPs (vs. 56.8% nationally).

In 2014, carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere kept a level three times lower than the national average: 104.5 t/sq. km (vs. 314.5 t/sq. km nationally).

Generated household waste also stayed less than that in other districts. In 2014, household waste per capita in the district was 387 kg annually (vs. 442 kg nationally).

Culture ●●●●

In 2015, library visits in the district of Targovishte remained considerably above national average figures: 755 per 1,000 people while the national average was 583 per 1,000 people. A greater number of visits were also registered in the district's theaters: 434 vs. the national average of 302 per 1,000 people.

Visits to cinemas and museums remained about three times fewer than nationally, though statistics registered considerable increase in both indicators in 2015. Cinema visits in the district reached 259 per 1,000 people and museum visits reached 223 per 1,000 people.

Key Indicators for the District of Targovishte

Indicators of economic development	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	5,786	6,675	7,075	7,310	7,113	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	2,354	2,695	2,924	3,025	3,546	3,910
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	5,620	5,913	6,556	7,195	7,465	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	44.6	35.3	39.4	29.7	n.a.	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	63.4	65.7	63.9	57.9	57.8	56.7
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	55.7	57.6	53.9	48.7	51.2	51.6
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	11.7	12.4	15.6	15.7	11.4	8.8
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	13.1	15.2	17.9	16.7	17.3	15.0
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	31	31	31	32	32	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	911	1,299	2,165	2,700	2,056	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	1,405	1,607	1,562	1,784	1,712	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	20.2	24.3	38.3	29.4	41.8	33.8
Share of roads in good condition (%)	55.0	54.2	58.0	52.0	47.0	42.5
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0

Indicators of social development	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-4.9	-5.7	-6.0	-5.8	-6.7	-7.0
Net migration rate (‰)	-9.5	-3.7	-3.1	-3.2	-4.4	-3.5
Average grades at state matriculation exams	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	11.2	8.7	7.6	4.5	6.9	4.4
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	83.5	86.0	84.3	82.2	81.6	77.5
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	83.8	87.9	86.9	85.8	86.9	88.2
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	219	235	242	257	251	244
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	13.3	10.3	9.6	10.0	9.1	8.8
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	66.9	69.2	70.5	63.0	64.0	63.2
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	8.1	6.1	8.7	9.6	10.3	8.1
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WTP (%)	12.0	44.1	44.1	44.1	44.1	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/km ²)	69.4	69.4	88.7	92.5	104.5	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	26	26	25	36	9	259
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	246	364	373	480	506	434