

Gabrovo District

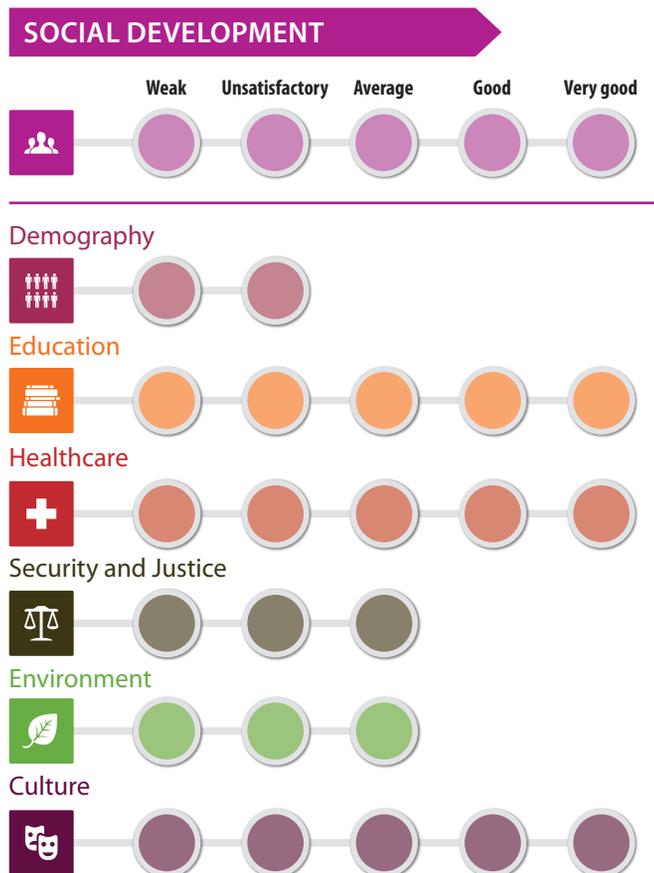
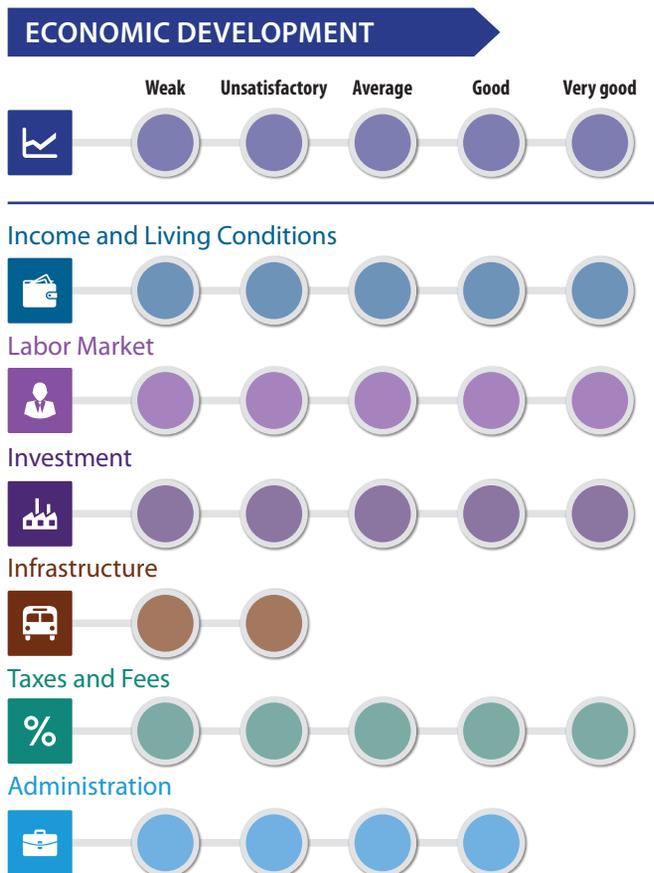
▶ Population (2016)	113,303
▶ Area (sq. km)	2,023.0
▶ Number of settlements	356
▶ Share of urban population (%)	81.8



Overview

Economic indicators place Gabrovo among the top ranking districts in Bulgaria. GDP and salaries in the district have kept growing; the labor market has retained a positive trend while local and foreign investment has been increasing. All monitored taxes and fees in the district's municipalities, without exception, have maintained average rates lower than the national average figures. The district ranks first in the country in local government transparency.

The rapid population ageing is due to both a low birth rate and outmigration. The average grade in 2017 BLL matriculation exams was a little above the national average. The relative state of healthcare in the district can be evaluated as very good. The district is also characterized by a relatively high crime clearance rate. Besides, Gabrovo is one of the most highly urbanized districts which explains both the high share of people with access to public sewerage and the relatively intense cultural life.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●●●●●

Income and Living Conditions ●●●●●

Indicators in this category place Gabrovo among the top ranking districts in Bulgaria: immediately after the capital and Stara Zagora. Wealth and salaries in the district increased in 2015: GDP reached 10,358 BGN/person while it was 12,339 BGN/person for the country as a whole. The annual average net salary reached 8,826 BGN (vs. 10,535 nationally). In 2016 household incomes also grew considerably to reach 5,728 BGN/person (vs. 5,167 BGN/person nationally).

The district's share of people living in material deprivation (21.4%) remained among the lowest in the country (31.9% nationally) while that of people living below the national poverty line was 14.9% (vs. 22.9% nationally) in 2015.

Labor Market ●●●●●

The district of Gabrovo continued its good performance in the labor market with a ranking immediately after the capital and Varna. In 2016 again, economic activity in the district was still among the highest in the country despite a drop to 72.2% (vs. 68.7% nationally). At the same time employment kept growing to reach 67.7% (vs. 63.4% nationally) while unemployment dropped to 6.3% (vs. 7.7% nationally).

The district's industrial profile determines the educational status of the workforce. The share of people aged 25–64 with secondary general and secondary specialized education is 66% (vs. 55% nationally). The share (8%) of people with primary or lower education is two times lower than the national average of 18%.

Despite the negative demographic processes in the district, an improvement in the demographic replacement ratio (the ratio between the population aged 15–19 and that aged 60–64) was noticeable in 2016. However, at 48.3%, it remained way below the national average figure of 62.8%, which indicates certain negative prospects for workforce reproduction.

Investment ●●●●●

Investment in Gabrovo kept increasing in 2015, though no drastic increase was noticeable. FTA acquisition expenditure reached 2,648 BGN/person (vs. 2,973 BGN/person nationally) while the cumulative FDI rose to almost 300 m euro by the end of 2015 or 2,510 euro/person (vs. 3,520 euro/person nationally).

As of 30th June 2017 the sums paid from operational programs in the district reached 271 m BGN or 2,395 BGN/person (vs. 1,344 BGN/person nationally), which once again placed Gabrovo second after the capital in utilization of

EU funds relative to the population. The Gabrovo city municipality utilized the largest sums of EU funds (3,385 BGN/person) while the municipality of Dryanovo utilized the smallest (569 BGN/person), though that figure, too, was way above most municipalities in Bulgaria.

Infrastructure ●●

Road density in the district is higher than the national average. The share of first class roads (17.1%), however, is below the national average of 18.6%.

In 2016 road surface quality worsened and the share of roads in good condition – 34.1% – remained way below the national average of 41.5%.

The share of households with Internet access as well as that of people who used the Internet in 2016 increased but they were still relatively low.

Taxes and Fees ●●●●●

The average rates of absolutely all monitored taxes and fees in the district's municipalities were below the national average figures. What is more, no municipality of Gabrovo changed its rates in 2017. Gabrovo was the only district in the country besides Sofia (capital city) with unchanged rates in 2017.

The annual license tax for retailers and the household waste collection fee for non-residential property of legal entities were considerably below national average.

Administration ●●●●●

For yet another year the district of Gabrovo had evaluations for development of electronic government and the availability of one-stop shop services close to the national average figures in 2017. The district also held the first place in the country for the highest transparency of local government with a rating of 69.6% while the national average rate was 59.0%. The municipalities with the highest rating in the district once again were those of Gabrovo and Sevlievo.

The share of the district's territory covered by cadastral maps has stayed unchanged since 2014, so in 2016 it was still 21.3% (vs. 22.5% nationally). All municipalities in the district have some proportion of cadastral coverage.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●●●●

Demography ●●

For the second successive year Gabrovo had the worst age dependency ratio (the ratio of the population aged 65+ to that aged 0–14), which reached 245.5% while the national average ratio was 147.1%.

The rapid population ageing in the district was determined by a low birth rate and by outmigration. In 2016 the natural growth rate went on falling to reach –12.7‰, which was two times lower than the national average of –6‰. The net migration rate rose in 2015, though it retained its negative value of –4.4‰.

Gabrovo was one of the most highly urbanized districts in 2016: with an 81.8% share of urban population it ranked third after the capital and the district of Varna. Population density was still lower than the national average figure, however.

Education ●●●●●

Gabrovo's net enrolment rate of 77.5% in 5th–8th grade was close to the national average in 2016. The share of repeaters and that of dropouts from primary and secondary school were more favorable than the national average values.

The average grade of 4.17 at the matriculation exam in BLL in 2017 was still slightly below the national average of 4.22; the share of fail grades was also lower: less than 7% while the national average rate was 8%.

In contrast to the growth from the last few years, the number of university students in Gabrovo slightly shrank in 2016, following the general downward trend in the country. 6,454 students were enrolled in 2016 or 57 per 1,000 people while the national average was 34 per 1,000 people.

Healthcare ●●●●●

The relative state of healthcare in the district can be evaluated as very good. The number of health-insured people rose in 2016 and the district retained its position among the leaders in the country in terms of the share of health-insured population. Probably this is a reflection of ageing trends accelerating and the fact that retired people have health insurance from the state. The number of doctors is quite impressive: 1,479 people per GP in 2016 while the national average rate was 1,611 per GP and 468 people per specialist (vs. 530 on average nationally).

The number of hospital beds dropped in 2016 and remained slightly below the national average but hospitalizations kept a relatively high level, indicating trust in local

hospitals. That was probably due to the high availability of specialists in the district.

Security and Justice ●●●

In 2016 Gabrovo still had a high rate of crime clearance (62%) compared to the national average rate of 48% though the crime rate rose, overtaking the national average level.

The speed of justice administration, on the other hand, was not much different from the average levels despite the relatively low workloads of local courts. In 2016 a criminal judge in the district saw an average of 7.1 cases a month, while the national average was 9.4 cases a month. The share of pending cases rose to 8.2% (vs. 8.3% nationally) while that of cases closed within three months dropped by 3 p.p. to 92% (vs. 89% in the country).

Environment ●●●

The relatively high proportion of urban population in the district can explain the high shares of people with access to public sewerage systems (85.1% vs. 75.5% nationally). Connectivity with wastewater treatment plants was also quite considerable in 2015: 74.4% vs. 62.3% nationally.

On the other hand, carbon dioxide air pollution in the district was over ten times lower than the national average level.

In 2015 the district registered an increase in generated household waste to 609 kg/person annually while the national average was 422 kg/person.

Culture ●●●●●

The fact that a considerable part of the population is concentrated in towns contributed to the relatively high intensity of cultural life in the district of Gabrovo, holding second place in the country.

Gabrovo was once again the district with the highest rate of museum visits: 3,395 visits per 1,000 people while the national average was 734. Visits to local theaters (405 per 1,000 people) were also above the national average of 322 per 1,000 people. After a considerable rise in library visits in 2016, the district was ahead of national figures in this indicator too: its annual average of library visits reached 1,017 per 1,000 people while the national average rate was 605 per 1,000 people.

The only indicator in this category, for which Gabrovo figures lagged behind, was cinema visits relative to the population though it also registered some increase in 2016.

Key Indicators for the District of Gabrovo

Indicators of economic development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	8,876	9,208	9,037	9,833	10,358	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	3,351	4,408	4,858	4,787	5,102	5,728
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	6,827	7,399	7,912	8,283	8,826	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	25.0	24.6	12.8	13.0	14.9	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	66.0	68.0	72.2	72.1	73.0	72.2
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	59.6	61.4	65.8	66.1	67.4	67.6
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	9.9	9.6	8.8	8.1	7.5	6.3
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	25.0	25.1	24.9	26.3	26.8	25.9
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	48	48	48	48	51	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	1,345	1,181	1,534	2,598	2,648	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	2,224	2,245	2,139	2,261	2,510	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	39.8	34.8	48.2	64.4	49.4	54.3
Share of roads in good condition (%)	31.4	32.0	36.4	41.5	42.2	34.1
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	21.2	21.2	21.2	21.3	21.3	21.3

Indicators of social development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-9.7	-11.2	-10.7	-11.6	-12.5	-12.7
Net migration rate (‰)	-2.2	-0.9	-3.6	-4.8	-5.5	-4.4
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.46	4.24	4.27	4.37	4.23	4.12
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	4.17	4.70	3.73	4.32	6.60	7.08
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	79.5	78.5	78.3	77.6	78.7	77.5
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	94.2	93.5	92.7	94.0	95.5	96.1
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	201.2	239.3	261.5	246.2	258.4	256.1
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	15.7	14.1	14.1	12.7	13.5	13.8
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	55.6	61.7	56.7	52.2	51.2	61.7
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	8.4	6.6	7.6	12.1	6.2	8.2
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	66.6	66.7	66.8	66.8	74.4	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/sq. km)	41.1	35.3	30.7	31.0	25.7	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	103	69	154	145	379	391
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	293	293	322	399	370	405