

# Pernik District

▶ Population (2016)	124,613
▶ Area (sq. km)	2,394.2
▶ Number of settlements	172
▶ Share of urban population (%)	78.6

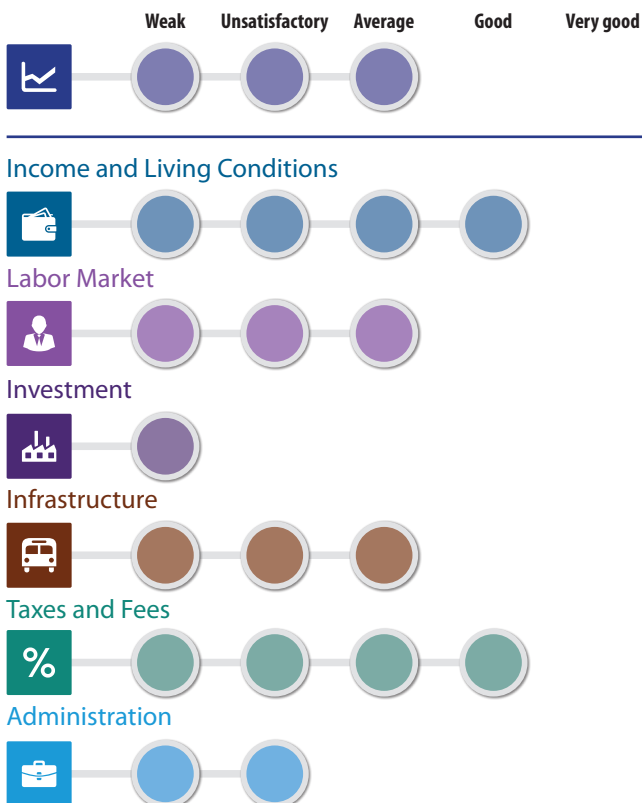


## Overview

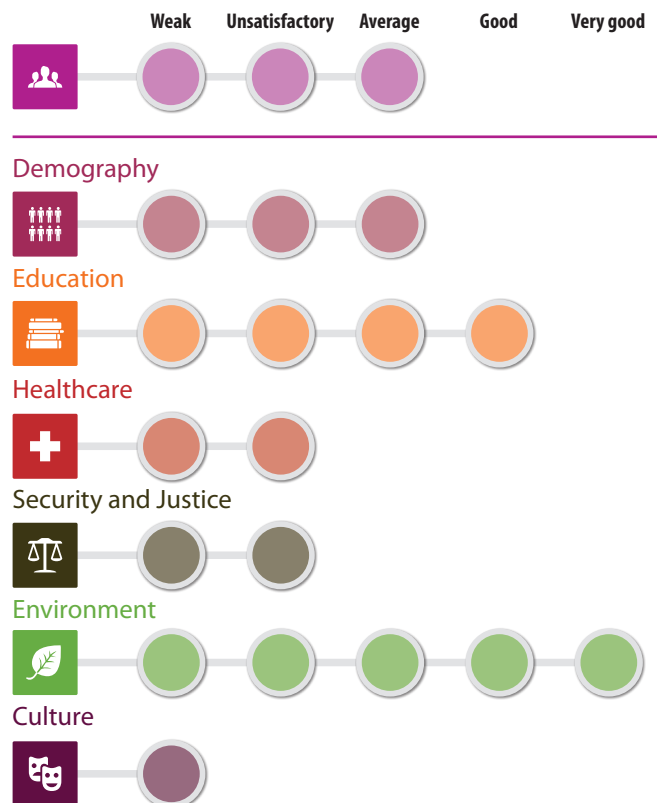
The GDP per capita in the district is still two times lower than the national average. Nevertheless, incomes have stayed higher mainly due to the daily labor migration of the population to the capital. An exceptionally high percentage of people in the district have secondary education. Pernik remains among the districts with relatively poor investment activity. Average local tax and fee rates in the district's municipalities have been largely more favorable than the national average ones. Evaluations of the local administration are relatively low; the rate of cadastral

map coverage is one of the most limited in the country. Population ageing in the district has mostly been a consequence of the low natural growth rate but also of the negative net migration rate. The shares of repeaters and drop-outs from primary and secondary education have remained considerably below national average rates. The local population mostly seeks for medical service outside the district because of the district's proximity to the capital. Crime rates have stayed high while crime clearance rates have remained below average. Cultural life is not particularly intensive.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●●●

### Income and Living Conditions ●●●●

GDP per capita in Pernik district was on the rise once again in 2015, albeit at a rate considerably slower than that in the country as a whole. Thus, it retained a value of 6,021 BGN – two times lower than the national average of 12,339 BGN. The pre-crisis level of GDP per capita in Pernik had reached almost 8,000 BGN which demonstrates the depth of the crisis and the district's slow recovery from it.

The average annual gross salary in the district also kept going up to reach 7,514 BGN in 2015 when the national average was 10,535 BGN annually. Income per household member dropped for the first time in over 10 years but the drop was small (2%) and its level stayed above national average. What explains the relatively high incomes, accompanied by a low GDP in the district, is the population's daily work migration to the capital.

The relatively high incomes in the district also determine the relatively low share of local population living in material deprivation as well as that of the population living below the national poverty line, though both indicators were close to national average values in 2015.

### Labor Market ●●●

In line with the general tendency in the country, economic activity in the district of Pernik dropped in 2016 after a few years of growth. Yet, it remained above the national average values. The relatively high economic activity, however, found an expression in employment levels below average and higher unemployment levels. Thus, while the employment rate in the district was close to the average one once again in 2016, the unemployment rate of 12.4% was considerably higher than the national average of 7.7%.

The local population's educational structure between ages 25 and 64 comprised an exceptionally high share of people with secondary education (71% vs. 55% for the country) in 2016. The respective shares of people with tertiary education and people with primary or lower education were below national average levels.

### Investment ●

Pernik remained one of the districts with relatively low investment activity. The number of enterprises rose slightly in 2015 but relative to the population it was still far below the national average. FTA acquisition expenditures registered a considerable rise but they, too, remained considerably below national average. At the same time, though, there was a serious outflow of investment from the district unlike most other districts. What is more, the decline in foreign investment in Pernik continued a downward trend noticeable for several years already and towards the end of 2015 its cumulative value reached 1,436 euro/person (vs. 3,250 euro/person nationally).

The district's performance in the utilization of EU funds has also been relatively poor. As of 30th June 2017 sums paid from operational programs rose to 826 BGN/person (vs. 1,334 BGN/person nationally). The district's municipalities with most utilized funds were Zemen and Trun, while that with least funds was Kovachevtsi.

### Infrastructure ●●●

The density of the road and railroad networks in the district is relatively high. Yet, the share of highways and first class roads is below average for the country.

In 2016 road quality in the district declined for the second year in a row, while it was improving in the country, but the share of road surfaces in good condition was relatively high: 47% (vs. 42% nationally).

The share of households with Internet access and that of local people using the Internet in 2016 were close to, though lower than, national average levels.

### Taxes and Fees ●●●●

The average rates of local taxes and fees in Pernik municipalities were relatively more favorable than the national average rates in 2017 once again. The district average vehicle tax was the only one slightly higher than the national average rate, albeit with a minimal difference. What is more, there were no cases of raised local taxes and fees in the district compared with 2016.

The rate of the annual tax on taxi transport in the district's municipalities was at the national minimum of 300 BGN with the exception of the Radomir municipality where the rate was 400 BGN.

### Administration ●●

The administration's evaluations for electronic government and the provided one-stop shop administrative services in the district's municipalities lagged behind national average figures in 2017 though the differences were insignificant.

The transparency rating of local government was considerably lower, although in 2017 it rose to 47% (vs. 59% nationally). The most transparent municipality in the district was once again that of Brezник with 64% and the least transparent ones were those of Trun and Zemen with 22% each.

Cadastral map coverage of the district's territory also stayed at an exceptionally low level: 4.5% – the second lowest after the district of Kardzhali. The municipalities of Zemen, Kovachevtsi and Trun have not been included in the cadastral map yet.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●●

### Demography ●●●

In 2016 for the third year in a row, Pernik was one of five districts (alongside Vidin, Gabrovo, Kyustendil, and Lovech) where there were over two persons aged 65+ for each person aged 0–14.

Population ageing is a consequence of both the exceptionally low natural increase rate and the negative net migration rate. In 2016, though there was a noticeable increase, the natural increase rate in the district was almost two times lower than the national average rate. The net migration rate was relatively favorable compared with the rate in most districts of almost –2‰, the most probable explanation being that the closeness to Sofia and the possibilities for daily labor migration to the capital have been keeping it at these levels.

Though a relatively high share of the local population lives in towns, the density of the district's population is almost two times lower than the national average.

### Education ●●●●

In 2016, for the second year in a row, the share of children enrolled in 5th–8th grade in Pernik district was higher than the national average, the distance increasing because of the rise in Pernik district (up to 80%) and the drop in the country as a whole (to 78.2%).

The shares of repeaters and dropouts from primary and secondary education in the district remained considerably below national average rates. On the other hand, however, school leavers' performance in the district was comparable to the national average level. At the matriculation exams in BLL in 2017 the average grade of Pernik district was 4.17 vs. the national average of 4.22 whereas the share of poor grades rose to over 9% (vs. under 8% nationally).

In the 2016/2017 academic year there were 40 enrolled university students in Pernik, which was the lowest number since the district had had a university, and the lowest among the districts offering higher education.

### Healthcare ●●

The share of health-insured people in Pernik was once again higher than the national average rate in 2016. The number of GPs remained higher as well.

At the same time, 2016 data indicate once again that the local population got specialized medical help outside the district – mostly because the capital, with the greatest number of medical specialists relative to the population, is so close. Pernik district, on its part, has the smallest number of medical specialists. For the fifth year in a row it was also the district with the smallest number of hospital beds (2.4 beds per 1,000 people vs. 5.1 per 1,000 people nationally) as well

as the district with the smallest number of hospitalizations – 106 per 1,000 people, vs. 235 per 1,000 people nationally.

### Security and Justice ●●

Criminal judges in the district court in Pernik had relatively low workloads in 2016. One judge saw an average of 7.0 cases a month while the national average rate reached 9.4 cases a month. That explains the relatively fast administration of justice in the district. In 2016, 91% of cases were closed within 3 months (vs. 89% nationally) while the share of pending cases dropped to a rate under 6% (vs. over 8% nationally).

Though the crimes against the person and property registered in the district (14.2 per 1,000 people) dropped in 2016, they were above the national average rate of 12.6 per 1,000 people for the fifth consecutive year. Meanwhile, the crime clearance rate remained below average. From all the crimes registered in 2016 43% were cleared (vs. 48% nationally).

### Environment ●●●●●

The relatively high urbanization rate in Pernik district was a prerequisite for the higher share of population with access to public sewerage in 2015: 79% compared to 76% nationally. Connectivity with wastewater treatment plants was also high.

The amount of generated household waste (352 kg/person annually) dropped for the third successive year in 2015 to a level below the average of 422 kg/person annually for the first time. Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (261 t/sq. km) also dropped and remained below the average of 324 t/sq. km in the country.

### Culture ●

The intensity of cultural life in Pernik district was considerably below the national average level. Both the maintenance of cultural sites/events and visits to them were probably affected by the capital's proximity.

All indicators in this category were below national average levels in 2016 once again. The largest increase was in the annual average number of visits to local theaters: from 83 per 1,000 people in 2015 to 152 per 1,000 people in 2016 but even the latter value was almost two times lower than the national average. Interest in the district's libraries also experienced a revival and went up dramatically to reach 589 per 1,000 people or close to the national average of 605 per 1,000 people. There was an increase, though a minor one, in museum visits as well.

In 2016, Pernik was still one of the four districts without a single cinema in 2016.

## Key Indicators for the District of Pernik

Indicators of economic development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	6,664	5,990	5,778	5,936	6,021	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	4,473	5,021	5,764	5,941	6,093	5,941
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	6,080	6,392	6,719	7,063	7,514	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	9.5	11.6	11.9	19.1	20.3	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	66.4	68.6	69.6	71.0	72.7	70.7
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	61.1	61.7	60.4	61.6	62.5	61.9
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	8.0	9.9	13.0	13.1	14.0	12.4
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	16.7	16.6	16.9	17.8	22.5	18.6
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	37	38	39	40	41	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	707	853	983	992	1,333	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	1,945	1,865	1,774	1,713	1,436	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	35.0	42.3	48.4	52.8	53.0	57.2
Share of roads in good condition (%)	41.7	52.0	48.9	49.5	49.2	47.0
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5

Indicators of social development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-11.3	-11.7	-11.1	-11.2	-12.5	-11.6
Net migration rate (‰)	-1.6	-1.7	-0.8	-1.7	-0.1	-1.9
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.39	4.12	4.16	4.25	4.12	4.06
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	4.05	4.47	5.28	5.57	8.07	8.27
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	80.2	77.8	77.0	76.7	78.9	80.3
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	88.8	88.3	87.5	88.6	90.0	89.8
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	100.6	103.6	103.4	99.3	97.6	106.1
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	14.3	14.9	15.2	14.0	15.4	14.2
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	38.2	33.1	34.6	30.6	31.1	42.6
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	8.5	7.8	10.1	10.0	6.5	5.9
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	74.0	74.1	74.2	74.1	73.9	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/sq. km)	297.8	257.0	250.9	292.8	261.3	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	88	84	69	55	83	152