

# Plovdiv District

▶ Population (2016)	672,428
▶ Area (sq. km)	5,972.9
▶ Number of settlements	224
▶ Share of urban population (%)	75.2

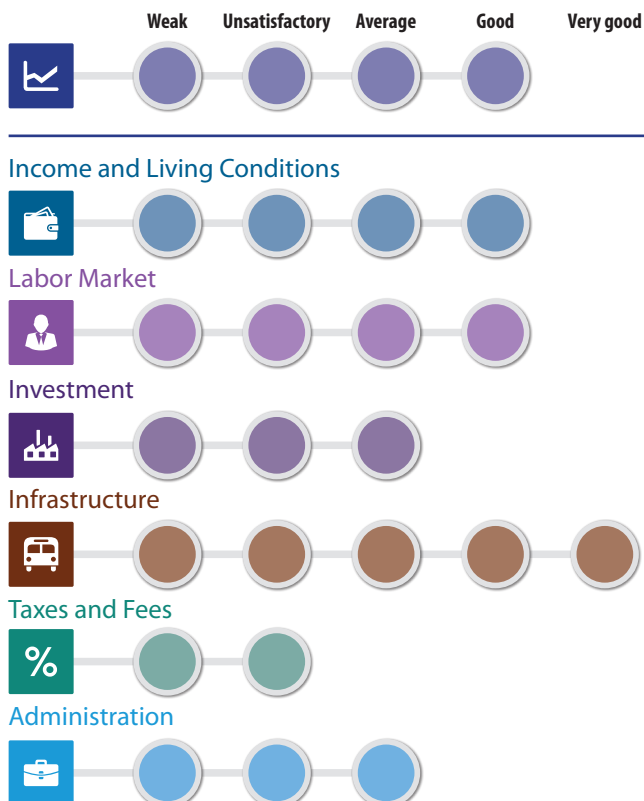


## Overview

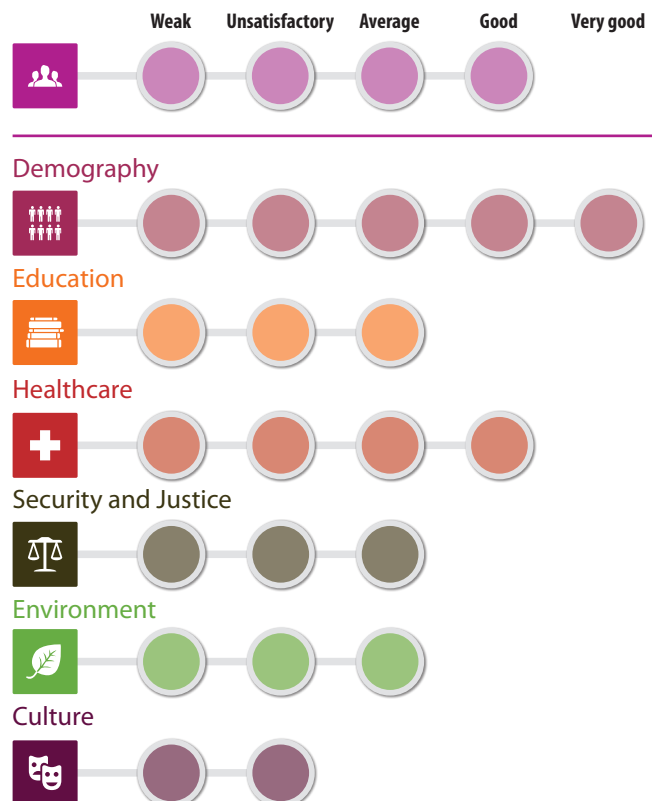
After several years of hesitant growth, GDP per capita in the district overtook the national average growth rate. The annual average salary also increased considerably. Unemployment began to decline though this was mainly due to the population's lower economic activity. Investment activity in the district of Plovdiv is close to national average figures. The average rates of local taxes and fees in the district's municipalities are above the national average level. The demographic picture has been considerably more favorable in the district than in the country as a whole because Plovdiv is one of the few districts that attract

net migrants from other districts. Plovdiv has continued its traditional good performance at matriculation exams. Both the number of doctors and the hospital capacity in the district have remained above national levels. Though the judges in it have some of the highest workloads in the country, administration of justice has been relatively speedy. The relatively high urbanization rate and population density in Plovdiv come to explain the high access of the population to sewerage and wastewater treatment plants. In 2016 cinemas registered the highest growth rate and the greatest number of visits.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●●●●

### Income and Living Conditions ●●●●

After several years of hesitant growth, GDP per capita registered a stable growth in 2015 and even overtook the country's average rate. The district ranked seventh with 10,173 BGN/person while the national average was 12,339 BGN/person. There were some fluctuations in household incomes but the annual average salary rose constantly and significantly. In 2015 it reached 9,084 BGN while the national average was 10,535 BGN and has generally been catching up each successive year.

The share of local population living in material deprivation and that of people living below the national poverty line in 2015 were comparable to the respective national rates.

### Labor Market ●●●●

In 2016 economic activity in Plovdiv declined to 66.5%, following the national trend. However, this was the second successive year when it stayed below the national average of 68.7%. Employment remained stable at about 62.0% (vs. 63.4% nationally) in the last 3 years. The declining activity led to lower unemployment: from 13.4% in 2013 it shrank rapidly to reach its 2016 rate of 6.8%, lower for the first time than the national average of 7.7%.

The educational structure of people between ages 25 and 64 in the district of Plovdiv remained almost unchanged and a little less favorable than the national average. In 2016 people with university degrees were 25.2% (vs. 27.7% nationally) while those with primary and lower education were 19.7% (vs. 17.7% nationally).

### Investment ●●●

Investment activity in Plovdiv was close to the national average. The number of enterprises increased to 54 per 1,000 people or almost the same as the national average. FTA acquisition expenditures also increased to 2,637 BGN/person (vs. 2,973 BGN/person nationally). The district lagged more significantly in attracting FDI. After a drop in investment was registered in 2014, in 2015 investment grew slightly once again but at 2,368 BGN/person remained way below the cumulative national average level of 3,250 BGN/person as of the end of that year.

EU fund utilization was also relatively low in the district. As of 30th June 2017 sums paid to beneficiaries in the district reached 1,044 BGN/person (vs. 1,344 BGN/person nationally). The municipalities of Hisarya and Krichim with over 3,000 BGN/person each were once again the ones with highest utilized funds while at the other end were those of

Brezovo, Rodopi and Sadovo which had utilized less than 500 BGN/person.

### Infrastructure ●●●●●

Because of its geographic location, densely populated areas and numerous municipalities, Plovdiv is one of the districts with the highest density of the railroad network. The road density and the share of highways and first class roads in Plovdiv are close to, though lower than, national average levels. In 2016, however, railroad quality remained considerably higher than the national average level: 48% of road surfaces were in good condition compared with 42% in the country as a whole.

In 2016 Plovdiv was among the districts which had the highest share of households with Internet access and the highest share of people who used the Internet – both indicators rose to reach over 68% (vs. 64% and 63% respectively in the country as a whole).

### Taxes and Fees ●●

The average size of local taxes and fees in the municipalities of the district was above average in 2017. Several municipalities raised tax rates compared to 2016. The greatest difference was in the size of the tax on vehicles and automobiles from 74 to 110 kW and the license tax on retail trade for up to 100 sq. m at the best locations. The tax for taxi passenger transport was also higher due to its relatively higher rate in the municipality of the city of Plovdiv.

Property transfer tax as well as immovable property tax for legal entities in the district's municipalities were close to national average levels.

### Administration ●●●●

The administration's evaluations for development of electronic government and one-stop shop services in the district's municipalities were close to average but lower in 2017. At the same time, the transparency rating of the administration in the district was slightly above average. The municipal administrations rated as most transparent were the city of Plovdiv and Assenovgrad, while the least transparent ones were Stamboliyski and Kaloyanovo.

Cadastral coverage in the district remained higher than the national average rate though it did not increase much in the last five years. Eight of the eighteen municipalities in the district still had no cadastral maps in 2016.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●●●

### Demography ●●●●●

The demographic picture in the district was considerably more favorable than that in the country as a whole. The ageing process was continuing, though its rate and depth were moderate in 2016. Plovdiv was one of the five districts in the country which managed to attract migrants from other districts and the net migration rate remained on the positive side. The natural growth rate of  $-5\%$  was slightly more favorable than the national average of  $-6\%$ .

The population in the district's towns (75.2%) increased and remained above the national average rate of 73.3% in 2016, which explains the higher population density of Plovdiv district.

### Education ●●●●

The net enrolment rate in 5th–8th grade in the district of Plovdiv registered a further decrease in 2016 and remained below average. At the same time, the share of repeaters as well as that of dropouts from primary and secondary education remained considerably above national levels.

The tradition of performing well at matriculation exams was continued in 2017. At the exam in BLL students from the district got some of the highest grades, the average reaching 4.33 (vs. 4.22 nationally). Poor grades were relatively few: 6% vs. 8% in the country as a whole.

Declining numbers of university students in Plovdiv followed the national general trend though in 2016 the district ranked among the first in student number relative to the population.

### Healthcare ●●●●●

Relative to the population, the number of doctors in Plovdiv remained higher than the national average in 2016. There were 1,595 people per GP (vs. 1,611 nationally) and 421 people per specialist (vs. 530 nationally).

The number of beds in local general hospitals kept increasing in 2016, ranking Plovdiv in the first place in the country with 7.4 beds per 1,000 people compared with the national average of 5.1 beds per 1,000 people. The availability of sufficient doctors and hospital beds comes as an explanation of the fact that Plovdiv was the district with the greatest number of hospitalizations for the second year in a row in 2016: 408 per 1,000 people compared with the national average of 235 per 1,000 people.

### Security and Justice ●●●●

Though judges in the district were among the most overloaded ones in the country, in 2016 once again administration of justice was relatively speedy. A criminal judge saw an average of 13.2 cases a month compared with the national average of 9.4 cases a month. At the same time, 95% of cases at the district court were closed within three months (vs. 89% nationally) while pending cases were 5% (vs. 8% nationally).

The district of Plovdiv retained its relatively low registered crime rate in 2016. Registered crimes against the person and property dropped to 9.1 per 1,000 people compared with the national average of 12.6 per 1,000 people. Along with the dropping crime rate there was a rise in the crime clearance rate for the third year in a row and in 2016 it overtook the national average rate. Almost 55% of registered crimes during that year were cleared while the national rate was 48%.

### Environment ●●●●

The relatively high urbanization rate and population density in Plovdiv come as an explanation for the high access to sewerage in the district. In 2015, 80% of the population lived in areas with public sewerage systems (vs. national average rate 76%), while 64% had access to sewerage connected with wastewater treatment plants (vs. 62% on average in the country).

Atmospheric pollution with carbon dioxide remained below the national average but the amount of generated household waste was above average in 2015. Carbon dioxide emissions amounted to 137 t/sq. km (vs. 324 t/sq. km nationally) and generated household waste rose to 521 kg/person (vs. 422 kg/person nationally).

### Culture ●●●●

The fastest growing interest and the greatest number of visits for 2016 were registered in cinemas. Cinema visits reached 967 per 1,000 people (vs. 778 per 1,000 people nationally). On the other hand, library visits registered the most significant decline that year: 118 per 1,000 people, far below the national average of 605 per 1,000 people.

In 2016 there were 246 theatre visits per 1,000 people in the district (vs. 322 per 1,000 people nationwide) and 436 museum visits per 1,000 people (vs. 734 per 1,000 people for the country).

## Key Indicators for the District of Plovdiv

Indicators of economic development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	8,967	9,138	9,440	9,295	10,173	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	3,657	3,988	4,514	4,410	4,300	4,381
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	6,889	7,418	7,922	8,504	9,084	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	20.3	19.3	23.1	19.9	22.6	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	64.2	67.7	70.7	71.7	68.8	66.5
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	58.4	60.0	61.2	62.2	62.1	62.0
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	8.8	11.2	13.4	13.1	9.6	6.8
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	23.6	22.6	23.4	25.1	25.4	25.2
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	50	51	51	52	54	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	2,144	2,514	2,291	2,422	2,637	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	1,847	1,972	2,430	2,284	2,368	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	47.5	55.1	60.7	45.0	61.7	68.4
Share of roads in good condition (%)	47.5	48.0	43.7	44.5	47.1	47.6
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	24.4	24.4	24.4	24.4	24.4	24.6

Indicators of social development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-3.8	-4.5	-4.0	-4.3	-4.9	-5.1
Net migration rate (‰)	0.2	1.4	3.1	0.5	1.4	2.6
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.53	4.29	4.34	4.34	4.31	4.27
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	3.18	5.03	4.91	4.56	7.04	8.61
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	82.3	80.7	79.5	78.8	78.0	77.7
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	88.4	87.7	86.5	87.2	88.4	87.7
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	228.0	327.8	353.0	242.2	412.1	408.0
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	11.9	10.9	11.3	10.6	10.3	9.1
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	35.3	33.6	32.1	34.4	37.8	54.5
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	5.9	5.3	5.4	14.6	5.4	5.2
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	54.1	54.3	54.6	54.9	64.1	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/sq. km)	141.6	151.0	127.6	131.7	137.0	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	799	703	769	808	869	967
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	204	190	250	299	259	246