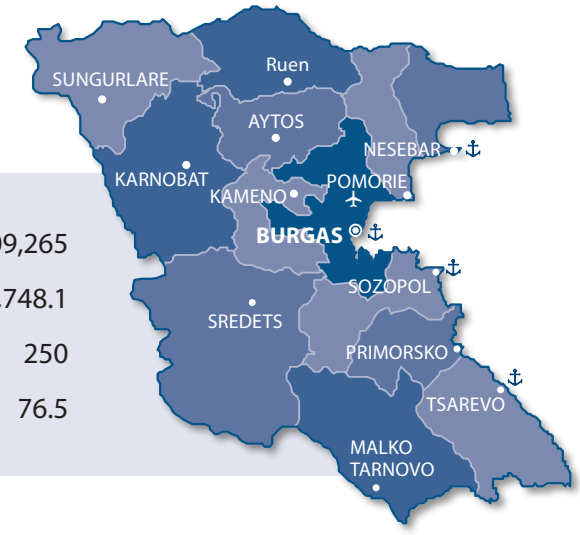
# Burgas District




| | |
|---|---|
| ▸ Population (2019) | 409,265 |
| ▸ Territory (sq. km) | 7,748.1 |
| ▸ Number of settlements | 250 |
| ▸ Share of urban population (%) | 76.5 |

Both GDP per capita and salaries in the district of Burgas continued to grow in 2018, though at a slower pace than in the other districts, and remained slightly below the national average. The labor market did relatively well in 2019. The district is among the leaders in investment and business activity. The number of enterprises per person went slightly up and remained above the national average. Foreign investment continued to increase, while local investment remained stagnant. The quality of the road infrastructure keeps deteriorating. Local tax rates are higher than the national average. In 2020, the functioning of e-administration in the district again received relatively good evaluation. However, the Active transparency rating of local government is still low.

Against the general tendency towards population ageing in Bulgaria, Burgas district is doing quite well. The majority of people live in urban areas. The average results in the external evaluation at the end of 7th grade remain higher than the national average, but those in the matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature are lower than those nationwide. The number of university students in the district is also relatively low. The main factor for the unfavorable state of healthcare in Burgas district is the shortage of medical staff. The crime rate is relatively high and detection relatively low, though the indicators show some improvement. Air quality is relatively good. The amount of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling is considerable. Theater and cinema visits are at acceptable levels, while the figures for those to museums and libraries indicate low interest.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WEAK | UNSATISFACTORY | AVERAGE | GOOD | VERY GOOD

- Income and living standard
- Labor market
- Investment and economy
- Infrastructure
- Local taxes
- Administration

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

WEAK | UNSATISFACTORY | AVERAGE | GOOD | VERY GOOD

- Demography
- Education
- Healthcare
- Public order and security
- Environment
- Culture

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Income and living standard

Both GDP per capita and salaries in the district of Burgas continued to grow in 2018, though at a slower pace than in the other districts and remained slightly below the national average. The average annual gross salary of employed people was 11,200 BGN, compared to 13,800 BGN as the national average. The average annual income per household member did not show significant increase in 2019 and remained relatively low at 5,169 BGN/person against the national average of 6,013 BGN/person.

Poverty levels in the district were close to the national average in 2019, both as regards the percentage of people living in material deprivation and of those living below the poverty line.

## Labor market

The labor market did relatively well in 2019. Economic activity went up to reach 73%, the employment rate rose by 2 p.p. and at 69.4% came quite close to the national average of 70.1%. Unemployment underwent a sharp decrease to 3.6% and for the first time in four years returned to a level below the national average of 4.2%.

The educational status of the work force in the district is relatively unfavorable. The share of people with higher education is 23.0%, against 28% on a national level, while the share of people with primary education or less is 20%, which is above the national average of 18%. The population replacement ratio of those aged 15-19 to those aged 60-64 has been rising and in 2019 it remained higher than the national figure. Thus for every 100 people who will leave the workforce in the next few years, there are 69 people who could enter the labor market.

## Investment and economy

In 2018, the district retained its place among the leaders in investment and business activity. The relative number of enterprises remained considerably above the national average – 75 per 1,000 persons, against the national average of 59 per 1,000 persons, even though there was a slight increase. FTA acquisition expenditure was 2,995 BGN/person, against the national average of 2,750 BGN/person but the past three years have seen stagnation in that area. By contrast, FDI was marked by a clear upward trend, as it reached 5,019 EUR/person, against 3,560 EUR/person on a national level. Production value per capita in the district is also extremely high – 34,500 BGN/person, with only Sofia district and Sofia (capital city) outranking Burgas.

Payments made for European projects have grown, albeit slower than expected, and are nearing the national average levels. By 15 June 2020 the sums utilized in the district reached 1,829 BGN/person, with the municipalities of Sozopol and Primorsko holding the top places.

## Infrastructure

The density of the road network and the railroads in the region is below that of the country on average, yet the share of highways and first-class roads (26%) exceeds the national average of 19%. Nevertheless, the quality of the roads in the district of Burgas continues to deteriorate. In 2019, the share of good quality road surfaces was 32.5%, against the national average of 41.4%.

For the second year in a row, the share of households with good internet connectivity rose sharply to reach 77.7%, exceeding the national average of 75.1%.

## Local taxes

Similar to most of the developed regions, local taxes in the district of Burgas are high – a tendency sustained in 2020 as well. The margin is especially wide in the retail trade tax – within the municipalities in the region its average was 15.22 BGN/100 sq.m, while the national figure was 12.93 BGN/100 sq.m.

The annual tax rate for taxi transportation was also considerably above the national average – 545 BGN on average for the municipalities in the district, against 498 BGN nationwide.

Municipalities with relatively higher tax rates include the tourist towns of Sozopol, Pomorie and Burgas, while the less developed Aitos and Karnobat impose lower rates.

## Administration

Cadastral map coverage in the district of Burgas made slow progress in 2019. The local authorities' self-assessment on the development of their e-services remained relatively high in 2020, but the evaluation on the provision of one-stop shop administrative services was below the national average.

The AIP Active transparency ratings of the local administration also remained low – 67%, against the national average of 71%. The highest ratings in the district of Burgas were achieved by the municipalities in Burgas, Aitos, Karnobat and Sozopol, and the lowest ones by those in Kameno and Malko Tarnovo.

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

## Demography

Demographic trends in the district of Burgas remained negative, though compared with the general tendency towards population ageing in Bulgaria, the district was doing quite well. In 2019, the natural growth rate of the population in the district continued to fall but at –4.7‰, it remained considerably higher than the national average of –6.7‰. More people migrated to the district than out of it, resulting in a net migration rate of 2.1‰ and placing Burgas among the few districts in Bulgaria with positive net migration figures.

In 2019 the age dependency ratios continued to rise but remained more favourable than the national average.

A large part of the population in the district of Burgas – 77% – lives in urban areas, compared with 74% on average for the whole of Bulgaria. The density of population is well above the country's average – 2,238 persons/sq.km in the district, against the national average of 1,510 persons/sq.km.

## Education

The enrolment rate in 5th-8th grade fell slightly in 2019 and remained a little below the national average. The relative share of dropouts from primary and secondary education in the region went up and was again above the national average. At the same time, the share of repeaters fell to 0.8%, compared to 0.9% for the country on average. In 2019 the number of teachers in primary and secondary education went up again but still failed to reach the national average.

The results in the 2020 external examination in mathematics at the end of 7th grade remained higher than the national average. At the same time, the average grades in the matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature were below those across the country on average. University student numbers in the district also remain relatively low: 15 per 1,000 persons, compared to the national average for 2019 of 32 per 1,000 persons.

## Healthcare

The healthcare system in the district has been performing poorly. This is mostly due to the shortage of both physicians and beds in the local hospitals. What is more, in 2019 the number of GPs, as well as that of specialist physicians declined further. The number of beds in general hospitals was 350 per 1,000 persons, with 550 per 1,000 persons as the national average.

The share of people with health insurance in Burgas district continued to rise in 2019 but compared to the national average remained relatively low – 84.8%, against 88.8%.

The number of patients treated in the local hospitals also remained considerably lower than the national average – 183 per 1,000 persons, while in the country as a whole it was 254 per 1,000 persons on average. Having in mind the shortage of doctors and the smaller number of hospital beds, the assumption is that the population seeks medical care outside the district.

## Public order and security

Indicators for the performance of the judicial system in the district of Burgas show results close to the average ones for the country as a whole. The workload of criminal judges was slightly below the national average for 2019, with 89% of the criminal cases closed within 3 months against 90% nationwide. The share of pending cases, on the other hand, equals the national figure of 10%.

Crime rates in Burgas district are higher and detection rates lower, although there has been considerable improvement in the past few years. In 2019, the number of registered crimes against person and property fell to 14.2 per 1,000 persons, whereas on a national scale its average was 11.1%. The detection rate went up to reach 44%, against 52% as the national average.

## Environment

The indicators for air quality in the district of Burgas are relatively good. Carbon dioxide emissions rose slightly in 2018 to reach 93 t/sq.km, which is much lower than the national average of 275 t/sq.km.

The concentration of quite a large part of the population in urban areas also explains the relatively large share of people living in settlements with access to public sewerage systems – 80%, versus the national average rate of 76%. Access to sewerage connected with wastewater treatment plants is also high – 66%.

The amount of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling is large – 83%, against 71% on average across the whole country.

## Culture

The indicators for this category present a contradictory situation for the district of Burgas. On the one hand, theater and cinema visits are comparable in number to those across the country, while on the other hand, museums and libraries enjoy little popularity. What is more, while visits to the latter have shown a slight increase on a national level, in Burgas district the reverse tendency can be observed.

Museum visits number 598 per 1,000 persons, against 770 per 1,000 persons on a national level, and library visits – 110 per 1,000 persons, compared to 683 per 1,000 persons as the national average.

# Key indicators for the district of Burgas

| Indicators of economic development | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | National average |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| GDP per capita (BGN, current prices) | 12,240 | 12,585 | n.a. | **15,615** |
| Average annual income per household member (BGN) | 5,037 | 5,037 | 5,169 | **6,013** |
| Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN) | 10,276 | 11,225 | n.a. | **13,775** |
| Share of the poor relative to the national poverty line (%) | n.a. | 19.6 | 20.0 | **22.6** |
| Employment rate of the population aged 15-64 (%) | 64.8 | 67.4 | 69.4 | **70.1** |
| Unemployment rate of the population aged 15-64 (%) | 8.6 | 5.3 | 3.6 | **4.2** |
| Share of the population aged 25-64 with primary or lower education (%) | 22.2 | 20.1 | 20.4 | **17.6** |
| Share of the population aged 25-64 with tertiary education (%) | 24.8 | 20.1 | 22.5 | **28.0** |
| Production value (BGN/person) | 31,395 | 34,472 | n.a. | **25,855** |
| Expenditure on fixed tangible asset acquisition (BGN/person) | 3,002 | 2,995 | n.a. | **2,750** |
| Cumulative foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises (EUR/person) | 4,579 | 5,019 | n.a. | **3,560** |
| Share of households with Internet (%) | 60.0 | 68.9 | 77.7 | **75.1** |
| Share of roads in good condition (%) | 40.1 | 36.9 | 32.5 | **41.4** |
| Density of the road network (km/100 sq.km territory) | 15.2 | 15.2 | 15.2 | **17.9** |
| AIP active transparency rating of the local self-government (%)* | 65.0 | 68.0 | 66.9 | **70.7** |

| Indicators of social development | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | National average |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Natural population growth rate (‰) | –4.3 | –4.3 | –4.7 | **–6.7** |
| Net migration rate (‰) | 1.6 | 1.3 | 2.1 | **–0.3** |
| Average grade in the matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature** | 4.06 | 4.11 | 4.18 | **4.20** |
| Average grade in the external exam in mathematics at the end of 7$^{th}$ grade (points)** | 32.5 | 36.9 | 38.1 | **36.3** |
| Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students | 71 | 73 | 80 | **89** |
| Net enrolment of the population in 5$^{th}$-8$^{th}$ grade (%) | 87.7 | 87.3 | 85.9 | **86.6** |
| Share of people with health insurance (%) | 83.9 | 84.1 | 84.8 | **88.8** |
| Population per one GP (number of people) | 1,856 | 1,976 | 2,006 | **1,688** |
| Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people | 18.1 | 15.2 | 14.2 | **11.1** |
| Workload of criminal judges in office (cases/month) | 8.8 | 7.8 | 8.9 | **9.1** |
| Share of the population with access to public sewerage networks (%) | 78.6 | 79.6 | 79.7 | **76.2** |
| Generated household waste per capita (kg/person/year) | 392 | 433 | n.a. | **409** |
| Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%) | 95.5 | 83.2 | n.a. | **70.9** |
| Visits to the cinema per 1,000 persons | 855 | 800 | 843 | **659** |
| Visits to the theater per 1,000 persons | 340 | 349 | 378 | **362** |

* The data for 2019 are included in the 2020 study. The same also applies for the previous years.

** The data refer to the 2019-2020 academic year while the matriculation exam was held in 2020. The same also applies for the previous years.