

Kyustendil District

▶ Population (2019)	116,915
▶ Territory (sq. km)	3,051.5
▶ Number of settlements	182
▶ Share of urban population (%)	70.0



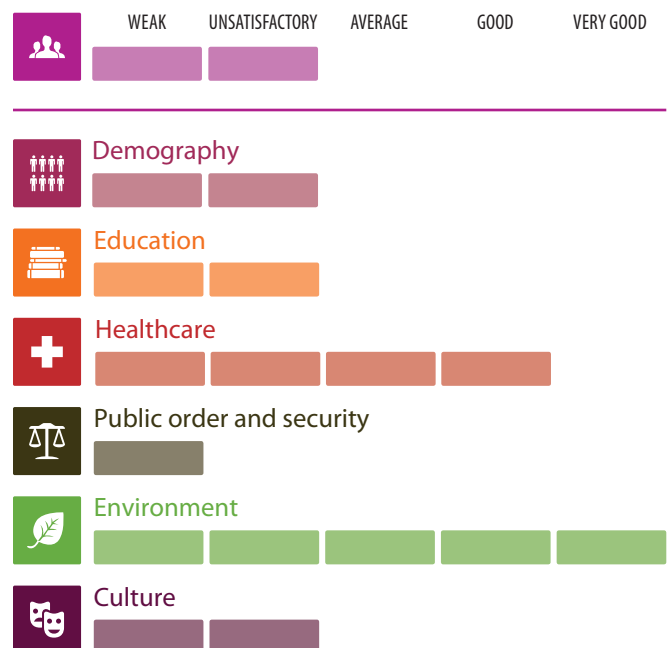
GDP per capita in Kyustendil district has registered the third highest annual growth rate in the country, yet its value is still relatively small. Both salaries and incomes have been growing as well, though at rates below the national average ones, and their amounts have remained considerably below average. The educational profile of the workforce is dominated by a significant share of people with secondary education. Kyustendil district is characterized by weak investment activity. Road quality is traditionally higher than in the country on average. Households still have limited internet access. The average rate for each of the monitored local taxes in the municipalities of Kyustendil district is lower than the national average. The local admin-

istration's transparency ratings remain relatively low. The population ageing tendencies in Bulgaria as a whole are particularly evident in Kyustendil district, whose demographic indicators are among the most unfavorable in the whole country. Students' results remain relatively low. The provision of the district healthcare system with doctors is relatively good. The number of beds in the local general hospitals is close to the national average. Kyustendil is doing relatively poorly in terms of public order and security. The district is a leader in environmental indicators, mostly due to the quantities of waste generated by the households and their management. Cultural life in Kyustendil district is characterized by its low intensity.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and living standard

GDP per capita in Kyustendil district recorded one of the highest annual growth rates in the country for 2018, increasing by 16.2%, versus the national average of 9.3%. However, its nominal value still remained relatively low – 9,300 BGN/person, compared to the national average of 15,600 BGN.

Incomes and salaries in the district also kept growing, though at a slower than average pace, and remained significantly below the national average. In 2018, the average gross annual salary in Kyustendil district was 9,500 BGN, compared to 13,800 BGN nationally. The annual income per household member in 2019 reached 4,977 BGN, versus 6,013 BGN in the country on average.

The share of the population living with material deprivation in the district has been lower than the national average in the last seven years. At the same time, the share of the population living below the national poverty line remains relatively high – 32.9% in 2019, compared to 22.6% in the country.

Labor market

Over the last five years, economic activity in Kyustendil district has stayed at almost the same level and, compared to its rising rates countrywide, it continues to lag behind. In 2019, economic activity reached 70.2%, compared to 74.3% in the country. After a serious increase in the period between 2015 and 2017, the employment rate in the district slowed its growth and in 2019 it was 67.6%, versus an average of 70.1% nationwide. At the same time, the unemployment rate continued to decline and came down to 2.6% – one of the lowest levels in the country, while the average rate is 4.2%.

The educational profile of the workforce is dominated by a significant share of people with secondary education. Figures show the proportions of both people with university degrees and those with primary or lower education – 21.5% and 5.6% respectively – falling below the average ones in the country – 28.0% and 17.6% respectively.

The labor market in the district is also affected by the factor of population ageing. The population replacement rate, measured as the ratio of the population aged 15-19 to that of those aged 60-64, reached 52.4%, compared to 65.9% in the country.

Investment and economy

Investment activity in Kyustendil district is weak. The relative number of enterprises in 2018 was close to the national average – 51 per 1,000 persons, against 59 per 1,000 persons in the country. FTA expenditures amounted to 1,118 BGN/person, versus the national figure of 2,750 BGN/person. FDI registered 361 EUR/person, compared to the national average of 3,560 EUR/person. The growth of FTA expenditures and FDI was exceptionally slow: the third lowest within the country in 2018.

Low investment impacted the levels of production value in Kyustendil district. In 2018 it amounted to only 11,900 BGN/person against 25,900 BGN/person as the national average.

By 15 June 2020 the payments made in the district to beneficiaries of EU operational programs amounted to 1,120 BGN/person, while the national average was 1,976 BGN/person. Within the district, the highest figures for utilization of EU funding were registered by the Rila municipality.

Infrastructure

The density of the road and railway networks in the district remains higher than the national averages. The share of highways and first-class roads is also higher and in the last five years, after the construction of the Struma highway, it has remained constant – in 2019 it was 20.5%, compared to 18.6% in the country. Road quality has traditionally been higher than the national average. In 2019, 54.6% of road surfaces in the district were in good condition, compared to the average of 41.4% nationwide.

Households' internet access in the district remains limited – 62.5%, compared to 75.1% in the country on average.

Local taxes

In 2020, the average figures for all monitored local taxes in the municipalities of Kyustendil district remained lower than the respective national rates. Moreover, the district had the lowest tax rates in the country after Vidin and Montana. The biggest margin was in the annual tax on taxi transportation. In the municipalities of Kyustendil district it was 300 BGN, compared to the average of nearly 500 BGN countrywide. The difference in the retail trade tax was over 20%, while the rates for motor vehicles and non-gratuitous acquisition of property were about 15% lower than the national averages.

Administration

Just as everywhere else in the country, cadastral map coverage in Kyustendil district increased considerably over the past two years. In 2019 it reached 95% of the district's territory, versus the national average of 91%.

The self-assessment of the local administration for the development of e-services has on the whole remained at the same level over the past few years and in 2020 it registered 2.98 out of 5 points, compared to 3.22 points in the country on average. The ratings for the provision of one-stop shop services, on the other hand, rose considerably in 2020 and were the fifth highest in the whole of Bulgaria, after Sofia (capital city), Lovech, Vratsa and Ruse.

Only the AIP Active transparency ratings of the local administration remained relatively low in 2020 – 56.9%, compared to the national average of 70.7%.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Demography

The population ageing tendencies in Bulgaria as a whole are particularly evident in Kyustendil district, whose demographic indicators in 2019 again were the second most unfavorable in the country, after those in Vidin. For the fourth consecutive year, the natural population growth rate remained below -13‰ or two times lower than the national average of -6.7‰ . Out-migration from the district is also a factor for the decline in population numbers, with the net migration rate reaching -4.8‰ .

All of this also entails a rapid deterioration of the age dependency ratios, which in 2019 were higher only in the districts of Vidin and Gabrovo. The age dependency coefficient, calculated as the ratio of the people 65+ to those aged 0-14, reached 228% in the district, compared to 150% in the country on average, and that of people aged 65+ to those aged 15-64 was 46%, versus the national average of 34%.

In 2019 the share of the urban population went up to reach 70%, compared to 74% on average nationwide, but the population density of urbanized areas decreased to 1,109 persons/sq.km, against 1,510 persons/sq.km in the country on average.

Education

In 2019, the figures for the enrolment in 5th-8th grade again remained higher than the national average. At the same time, the shares of repeaters and dropouts from primary and secondary education were lower, even though the figures for both recorded an increase. The number of primary and secondary school teachers has been rising and is approaching the national averages.

The grades of the students in Kyustendil district remained low in 2020. Their average score in the external examination in mathematics at the end of 7th grade was 30.0 points, compared to 36.3 points in the country. The average grade in the matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature was 4.08, compared to the average of 4.20 nationally. The number of “fail” grades (below 3.00) continued to rise and in 2020 made up 12.4%, versus 8.2% as the national average.

Kyustendil district is one of those without a university or university branch on its territory.

Healthcare

The healthcare system in Kyustendil district is relatively well provisioned with doctors. One local GP cares for an average of 1,426 persons, compared to 1 GP per 1,688 people in the country. In 2019, however, there still was a relative shortage of specialist physicians.

The number of beds in the district’s general hospitals is close to the average one in the country – 550 beds per 100,000 persons. The number of patients admitted for treatment is lower than

their average number in the country – 221 per 1,000 persons, compared to 254 per 1,000 persons respectively.

Public order and security

The performance of Kyustendil district in public order and security remained relatively poor in 2019. The workloads of criminal judges decreased from 2018, yet they were still relatively heavy. There were 11 cases a month per one judge on average, compared to 9 cases nationally. The workload volumes bore their impact on the speedy delivery of justice – the proportion of criminal cases closed within 3 months was relatively low at 85%, against the national average of 90%, and that of pending cases – high, with 13% in the district, compared to an average of 10% nationwide.

The number of crimes registered in the district has stayed at levels slightly above the national average, while detection rates have been rising, though they still remained relatively low in 2019. The registered crimes against the person and property reached 12 per 1,000 persons, versus 11 per 1,000 persons on average nationwide. The detection rate was 49%, versus the national figure of 52%.

Environment

Kyustendil district is the country’s leader in terms of environmental indicators. The main reason is the amount of household waste and the share handed over for treatment and recycling. In 2018, there was a significant drop in the amount of waste generated by households – 287 kg/person per annum, compared to the average of 409 kg/person in the country. At the same time, the share handed over for treatment and recycling reached 98%, versus the national average of 71%. Close to the national averages were the proportions of the population with access to public sewerage networks – 73%, versus the national average of 76%, and with a sewerage system connected to wastewater treatment plants – 62%, versus 64% countrywide.

Carbon dioxide emissions in the district remained higher than the average ones in Bulgaria.

Culture

Cultural life in Kyustendil district again retained its low intensity in 2019. An exception was the great interest in the museums in the district, where the registered visits were 1,094 per 1,000 persons, compared to an average of 770 per 1,000 persons in the country. Visits to theatres were three times fewer – 123 per 1,000 persons, versus the national average of 362 per 1,000 persons. The relative number of cinema visits was similar – 273 per 1,000 persons in the district, against 659 per 1,000 persons nationwide. Visits to libraries numbered 444 per 1,000 persons, compared to the national average of 683 per 1,000 persons.

Key indicators for the district of Kyustendil

Indicators of economic development	2017	2018	2019	National average
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	7,989	9,285	n.a.	15,615
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	4,773	4,773	4,977	6,013
Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN)	8,642	9,476	n.a.	13,775
Share of the poor relative to the national poverty line (%)	n.a.	15.8	32.9	22.6
Employment rate of the population aged 15-64 (%)	67.1	67.5	67.6	70.1
Unemployment rate of the population aged 15-64 (%)	4.3	3.6	2.6	4.2
Share of the population aged 25-64 with primary or lower education (%)	11.5	9.6	5.6	17.6
Share of the population aged 25-64 with tertiary education (%)	25.2	22.3	21.5	28.0
Production value (BGN/person)	10,656	11,850	n.a.	25,855
Expenditure on fixed tangible asset acquisition (BGN/person)	1,077	1,118	n.a.	2,750
Cumulative foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises (EUR/person)	350	361	n.a.	3,560
Share of households with Internet (%)	65.6	59.8	62.5	75.1
Share of roads in good condition (%)	56.3	51.8	54.6	41.4
Density of the road network (km/100 sq.km territory)	20.6	20.6	20.6	17.9
AIP active transparency rating of the local self-government (%)*	55.0	57.0	56.9	70.7

Indicators of social development	2017	2018	2019	National average
Natural population growth rate (‰)	-13.5	-13.4	-13.2	-6.7
Net migration rate (‰)	-5.6	-3.8	-4.8	-0.3
Average grade in the matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	3.95	3.96	4.08	4.20
Average grade in the external exam in mathematics at the end of 7 th grade (points)**	27.3	28.6	30.0	36.3
Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students	79	83	88	89
Net enrolment of the population in 5 th -8 th grade (%)	92.3	92.2	89.8	86.6
Share of people with health insurance (%)	94.6	94.9	97.0	88.8
Population per one GP (number of people)	1,359	1,429	1,426	1,688
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	13.5	11.3	11.7	11.1
Workload of criminal judges in office (cases/month)	12.3	12.8	11.0	9.1
Share of the population with access to public sewerage networks (%)	75.2	72.6	n.a.	76.2
Generated household waste per capita (kg/person/year)	447	287	n.a.	409
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	4.7	97.6	n.a.	70.9
Visits to the cinema per 1,000 persons	230	286	273	659
Visits to the theater per 1,000 persons	170	133	123	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.