

Kyustendil District

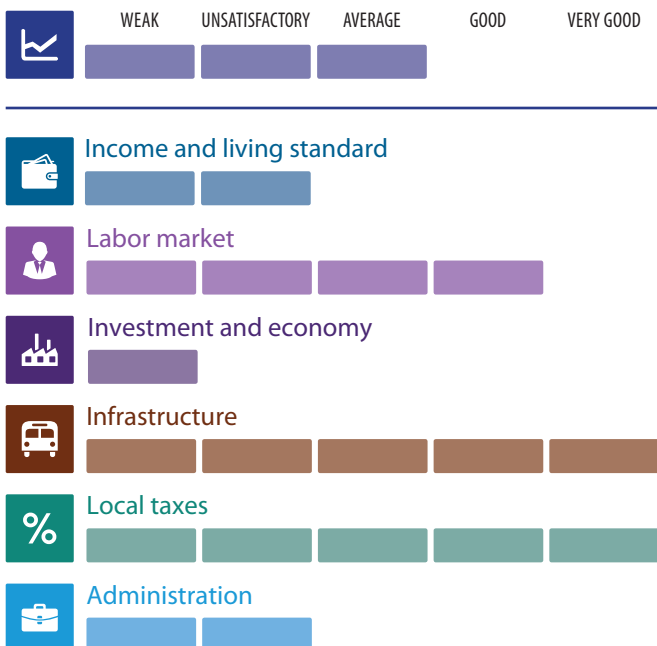
► Population (2020)	116,767
► Territory (sq. km)	3,051.5
► Number of settlements	182
► Share of urban population (%)	69.4



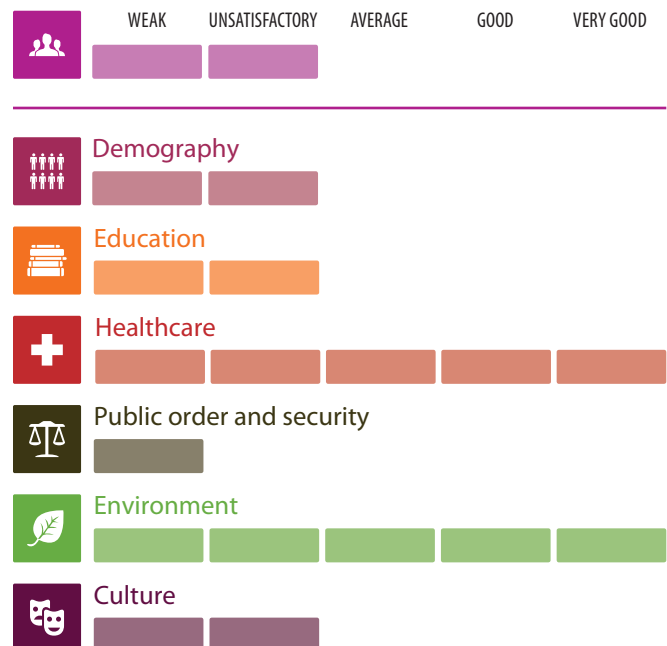
GDP per capita, salaries and incomes in Kyustendil district have all been growing but their levels remain below the national averages. Employment remains low and in 2020 it even went into decline. The trend toward population ageing is still a challenge before the labor market. Investment activity is among the weakest in the country. Utilization of European funds also retains its low levels. The density of the road and railway networks in the district remains higher than the national average. The share of highways and first-class roads is also higher. The average rate of local taxes in the municipalities is among the lowest in the country. However, the Active transparency rating of the local self-government also remains among the lowest in the country.

Due to the extremely negative values of the natural population growth, Kyustendil is among the districts with the oldest population. The shares of repeaters and dropouts from primary and secondary school are relatively low. Students' results remain unsatisfactory. Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest number of GPs, but there is a relative shortage of specialist physicians. Its performance in the field of justice is among the poorest in the country. The number of crimes and the share of detected crimes are close to the respective national averages. Kyustendil district is a leader as regards the environmental indicators, which is mainly due to the amounts of generated household waste and of those handed over for treatment and recycling. Cultural life is characterized by its low intensity.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ■■■

Income and living standard ■■

GDP per capita in Kyustendil district has continued to grow but its rate of increase in 2019 was among the lowest in the country and continues to lag behind those in the other districts. Salaries and incomes have also gone up but remain below the national averages. The annual gross salary reached 10,600 BGN/person, compared to the national average of 15,200 BGN, and annual income per household member reached 5,000 BGN, compared to 6,000 BGN nationally.

The share of population living below the national poverty line remains high – 32.9%, compared to 22.6% in the country. However, the share of population living with material deprivation in the district has remained lower than the national average – 16.9%, against 19.9% countrywide.

Labor market ■■■■

In 2020, economic activity rose slightly but remained relatively low – 70.6%, compared to 73.7% in the country. The employment rate in the district remained low, at 66.0%, versus an average of 68.5% nationwide. At the same time, the unemployment rate also remained low.

Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest share of the workforce with secondary education – 69%, compared to 54% in the country, which is in line with the district's industrial profile. The proportion of people with a university degree is 24%, versus 29% nationally, while the share of those with primary or lower education is the second lowest in the country, after that in the capital – 7%, against 17% nationally.

The labor market in the district continues to be affected by the factor of population ageing. The population replacement rate as a ratio of the population aged 15–19 to that aged 60–64 is 53%, compared to 67% in the country. This means that for every 100 people who are about to leave the labor market in the next few years, there will be only 53 young people joining the workforce.

Investment and economy ■■

Investment activity in Kyustendil district again remained among the lowest in the country for 2019. FTA acquisition expenditures over the past few years have recorded constant fluctuations but remain extremely low. In 2019, they amounted to 1,070 BGN/person, versus the national figure of 3,155 BGN/person. For its part, FDI was ten times lower than the national average – 372 EUR/person, compared to the national average of 3,655 EUR/person. These figures account for the relatively low production value in Kyustendil district – only 12,800 BGN/person against 28,000 BGN/person as the national average.

Utilization of European funds is also lagging behind. By 15 June 2021, payments made in the district to beneficiaries of EU operational programs amounted to 1,272 BGN/person, while the national average was 2,217 BGN/person. Within the district, there was not a single municipality with utilized EU funding per capita above the national average.

Infrastructure ■■■■■

The density of the road and railway networks in the district again remained higher than the national averages in 2020. The share of highways and first-class roads was also higher – 20.8%, compared to 18.5% in the country, and so was the share of road surfaces in good condition – 54.6% of, compared to the average of 41.4% nationwide.

Households' internet access in the district rose sharply and in 2020 it almost equalled the national average – 62.5%, compared to 75.1% in the country. Higher than average was the share of households connected to a gas supply – 5.4%, against 3.1% in the country. The installed RES capacity was 0.383 kW/person, compared to the national average of 0.603 kW/person.

Local taxes ■■■■■

In 2021, the average level of the local taxes in the municipalities of Kyustendil district again remained among the lowest in the country. The biggest margin was in the annual rates for motor vehicles and non-gratuitous acquisition of property.

The average tax rate on retail trade in the municipalities of the district was 10.06 BGN/sq. m, versus 12.99 BGN/sq. m in the country. The tax rate for taxi transportation was also considerably lower than the national average.

Administration ■■

Cadastral map coverage in Kyustendil district is relatively high. The self-assessments of the local administrations for the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop shop services were considerably lower than the national average.

In 2021, the AIP Active transparency rating of the local administration went up but remained among the lowest in the country – 61.9%, compared to the national average of 73.2%. The highest ratings were recorded in the municipalities of Kocherinovo, Kyustendil and Bobov dol – over 65%, though they, too, failed to even reduce their margin with the national average. The municipality of Boboshevo received the lowest ratings within the district.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ■■

Demography ■■■

The natural population growth rate dropped sharply in 2020 and apart from remaining below the national average, it was among the lowest in the country at -17.2‰, compared to -9.5‰ nationwide. Like most other districts during 2020, Kyustendil managed to attract new residents and for the first time in at least twenty years the net migration rate was a positive value - 14.7‰.

Nevertheless, due to the highly negative natural population growth rate, Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest rate of population ageing, preceded only by Vidin and Gabrovo in this indicator. The age dependency rate in the district, calculated as the ratio of the people aged 65+ to those aged 0-14, reached 230.5%, 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 34.1%.

The share of urban population is 69.4%, which is close to, but below the national average of 72.9%, but population density is relatively low - 1,108 persons/sq. km, against 1,506 persons/sq. km in the country on average.

Education ■■■

In 2020, the rate of enrolment in 5th-8th grade dropped slightly but again remained higher than the national average - 88.6%, versus 86.5% nationally. Kyustendil is also among the districts with relatively low shares of repeaters and dropouts from primary and secondary education. The proportion of primary and secondary school teachers remains close to, but below the national average.

The performance of the students in Kyustendil district remains unsatisfactory. Their average score in the 2021 external examination in mathematics at the end of 7th grade was 34.1 points, compared to 37.9 points in the country. The average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature was 4.04, compared to the average of 4.21 nationally. The number of "fail" grades (below 3.00) was 9%, versus 7% as the national average.

Kyustendil is among the few districts without a university or university branch on its territory.

Healthcare ■■■■■■

Делът на здравноосигурените в областта традиционно е The share of people with health insurance in the district is traditionally very high - 95.6%, compared to 88.7% in the country. The number of beds in the local general hospitals in 2020 also remained higher, albeit slightly, than the national average - 5.55 beds per 1,000 people, against 5.52 per 1,000 people in the country. Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest relative number of GPs, with one GP per 1,478 people, versus one GP per 1,727 in the country, but there is a relative shortage of specialist physicians.

The infant mortality rate is declining and is lower than the national average. The number of patients treated in the local general hospitals also remains below average - 122 per 1,000 people, compared to 138 per 1,000 people in the country.

Public order and security ■■

The performance of Kyustendil district in justice remained among the lowest in the country in 2019. The workloads of criminal judges were among the heaviest, which left its impact on the speed of delivery of justice. There were 11.8 cases a month per one judge on average, compared to 8.6 cases nationally. The proportion of criminal cases closed within 3 months was 82%, against the national average of 90%.

The crime rate, as well as the detection rate in the district, came close to the national average. In 2020, the registered crimes against the person and property were 9.6 per 1,000 persons, versus 9.9 per 1,000 persons on average nationwide. The detection rate in the district reached 51.3%, versus the national figure of 52.1%.

Environment ■■■■■■

Kyustendil district is the country's leader in terms of the environment indicators. This is mostly due to 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, though slightly below the respective national averages, were the proportion of the population with access to a public sewerage network - 72.7%, versus the national average of 76.4%, and of that with a sewerage system connected to a wastewater treatment plant - 62.3%, versus 64.6% countrywide.

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

Culture ■■■

Cultural life in Kyustendil district retained its low intensity in 2019. The pandemic and the restrictions on cultural events in the country had an even worse effect in the district. The relative number of cinema visits dropped by 84%, compared to 71% nationally, to reach 45 per 1,000 persons, against 190 per 1,000 persons nationwide. Museum visits declined by 71%, compared to 58% countrywide. Their relative number was 312 per 1,000 persons and for the first time fell below the national average, which was 322 per 1,000 persons. Visits to libraries fell by 53% to 209 per 1,000 persons, while in the country they decreased by 30% to 480 per 1,000 persons.

Key indicators for the district of Kyustendil

Indicators of economic development	2018	2019	2020	National average
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	9,285	9,468	n.a.	17,170
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	4,773	4,977	n.a.	6,013
Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN)	9,476	10,576	n.a.	15,209
Share of the population living below the national poverty line (%)	15.8	32.9	n.a.	22.6
Employment rate of the population aged 15–64 (%)	67.5	67.6	66.0	68.5
Unemployment rate of the population over 15 years of age (%)	3.6	(2.6)	(4.6)	5.2
Share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education (%)	9.6	5.6	7.1	16.9
Share of the population aged 25–64 with higher education (%)	22.3	21.5	24.0	29.2
Production value (BGN/person)	11,850	12,831	n.a.	28,027
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets (BGN/person)	1,118	1,070	n.a.	3,155
Cumulative foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises (EUR/person)	361	372	n.a.	3,655
Share of households with Internet (%)	59.8	62.5	78.6	78.9
Share of roads in good condition (%)	51.8	54.6	n.a.	41.4
Road network density (km/100 sq. km territory)	20.6	20.6	20.4	17.9
AIP active transparency rating of local government bodies (%)*	57.0	56.9	61.9	73.2

Indicators of social development	2018	2019	2020	National average
Rate of natural increase (‰)	–13.4	–13.2	–17.2	–9.5
Net migration rate (‰)	–3.8	–4.8	14.7	4.4
Average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	3.96	4.08	4.04	4.21
Average grade in the National external exam in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	28.6	30.0	31.4	37.9
Net enrolment of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	92.2	89.8	88.6	86.5
Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students	83	88	85	87
Share of population with health insurance (%)	94.9	97.0	95.6	88.7
Population per one GP (number of people)	1,429	1,426	1,478	1,727
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	11.3	11.7	9.6	9.9
Workloads of criminal judges in office (cases/month)	12.8	11.0	11.8	8.6
Share of population living in settlements with public sewerage networks (%)	72.6	72.7	n.a.	76.4
Generated household waste per capita (kg/person/year)	287	n.a.	n.a.	409
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	97.6	n.a.	n.a.	70.9
Visits to cinemas per 1,000 persons	286	273	43	190
Visits to museums per 1,000 persons	979	1,094	312	322

* The data for 2021 are included in the 2021 study. The same also applies for the previous years.

** The data refer to the 2020–2021 academic year while the matriculation exam was held in 2021. The same also applies for the previous years.