

Yambol District



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|---------------------------------|---------|
| ▶ Population (2020) | 116,911 |
| ▶ Territory (sq. km) | 3,355.5 |
| ▶ Number of settlements | 109 |
| ▶ Share of urban population (%) | 68.8 |

GDP in Yambol district has continued to grow, but remains far from the average level in the country. Incomes and salaries in the district also remain lower, which is the main factor for the high level of poverty in the district. Employment retains its value from the previous year and remains relatively low. FDI stocks have decreased and remain among the lowest in the country. Yambol is characterized by a high density of the road network, but the railway network is among the least developed in the country. The average levels of local taxes in 2021 were close to the national averages. The self-assessments of the local administrations in Yambol district for the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop-shop services are low. In 2020, there was a deterioration in the natural population

growth and the rate of attracting new residents to the district. The performance of the students in the district is very poor. The share of repeaters is on the increase and is significantly above the national average. Although the number of GPs relative to the population in the district is close to the national average, the number of specialist physicians is among the lowest in the country. The workloads of the local criminal judges are lower than in the country, and the delivery of justice is speedier. The relatively good assessments of Yambol district in the environment category are mainly due to the small volumes of generated household waste and its management. The pandemic and the restriction on cultural events in 2020 have had a negative impact on cultural life in the district as well.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Income and living standard



Labor market



Investment and economy



Infrastructure



Local taxes



Administration



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Demography



Education



Healthcare



Public order and security



Environment



Culture



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ■■

Income and living standard ■■

GDP in Yambol district continued to grow in 2019 and reached 10,100 BGN per capita, but remained far from the country's average of 17,200 BGN. Salaries and incomes in the district also registered a growth. The average gross annual salary of employed people increased significantly, by over 11%, to 12,000 BGN, compared to 15,200 BGN nationally. The average income reached 5,600 BGN per household member, against 6,000 BGN in the country.

Despite these favorable trends, poverty levels remain high. Yambol is the district with the highest share of the population living with material deprivation – 39.6% in 2019, compared to 19.9% in the country. The share of the population living below the poverty line is also significantly higher than the national average – 33.2%, versus 22.6% nationally.

Labor market ■■■■

The economic activity on the labor market declined in 2020 and for the third consecutive year was below the national average, with a rate of 70.7%, compared to 73.7% in the country. The employment rate retained its value from the previous year and remained at a relatively low level – 63.2%, versus 68.5% nationally. Unemployment remained above the national average.

Trends in the educational structure of the workforce are favorable, although the indicator values are still relatively low. The share of university graduates among the population aged 25–64 has increased to 23.5%, compared to 29.2% in the country, and that of people with primary or lower education has dropped to 21.3%, against the national average of 16.9%.

Although the deterioration of the population replacement rate in recent years is visible, its value remains relatively favorable. In 2020, the ratio of the population aged 15–19 to that of the 60–64 age group was 64.9%, compared to 67.1% in the country. This means that for every 100 people who are about to leave the labor market in the next few years, there are 65 young people who will join the workforce.

Investment and economy ■■■

Due to the dominance of the processing industry, Yambol is among the districts with a relatively small number of enterprises – only 47 per 1,000 persons in 2019, compared to 61 per 1,000 persons nationally, but the tendency is towards an increase in their number. The annual FTA acquisition expenditures have increased, but remain relatively low – 1,777 BGN/person, compared to the national average of 3,155 BGN/person. There has even been a decrease in FDI stock and it remains among the lowest in the country at 352 EUR/person, versus

3,655 EUR/person nationally. Production value has risen to reach 16,200 BGN/person, compared to 28,000 BGN/person in the country.

There has been an increase in the utilization of European funds, though it still remains below the national average. By 15 June 2021, the payments made in the district to beneficiaries of EU operational programs amounted to 2,068 BGN/person, while the national average was 2,217 BGN/person. Within the district, there is not a single municipality where the amount of utilized EU funding per capita is above the national average.

Infrastructure ■■■■

Yambol district is characterized by a high density of the road network. However, the railway network is among the least developed in the country, after that of Dobrich district. In 2020, the share of first-class roads and highways was above the national average – 20.6%, compared to 18.5% nationally. In recent years, there have been fluctuations in the figures indicating the quality of the road surface, with about 43.9% of the roads in good condition in 2019, against 41.4% in the country.

The share of households connected to high-speed internet went up in 2020 but remained among the lowest in the country – only 63.1%, compared to 78.9% nationally.

The share of households connected to a gas supply is relatively large. Installed RES capacity is relatively high.

Local taxes ■■■■

The average rates of local taxes in Yambol district in 2021 again remained close to the average ones in the country. Among the monitored taxes, relatively high were those on the real estate of legal entities and on non-gratuitous acquisition of property. At the same time, the rates on retail trade and taxi transportation remained below average. In 2021, the tax rate for retail trade in Yambol district was on average 8.16 BGN/sq. m, compared to 12.99 BGN/sq. m in the country.

Administration ■■■

The average self-assessments of the local administrations in Yambol district regarding the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop shop administrative services again remained below the respective national averages in 2021. The AIP active transparency rating achieved by the local administration in 2021 was 72.7%, compared to 73.2% in the country. Within the district, the highest rating was achieved by the municipalities of Bolyarovo and Tundzha.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Demography

In 2020, there was a deterioration in the natural population growth and a rise in the net migration rate. The natural population growth rate in Yambol district dropped to -11.5% , below the national average of -9.5% . There was a trend towards an increase in the net migration rate in almost the whole country and for the first time in a number of districts it reached a positive value. Yambol district was no exception, though its migration rate remained relatively low -4.3% .

In recent years, the process of population ageing in Yambol district has continued to accelerate. In 2020, the age dependency rate as a ratio of the people aged 65+ to those aged 0–14 reached 160.8%, compared to 150.6% nationally, and to the 15–64 age group it was 40.5%, versus 34.1% countrywide.

The share of urban population in Yambol district is lower than in the country -68.8% , against 72.9% nationally, and so is population density $-1,069$ persons/sq. km, compared to 1,506 persons/sq. km countrywide.

Education

The coverage of the education system has been on the increase and in 2020 it remained above the national average, with 89.8% in the district, versus 86.5% in the country. The share of repeaters has gone up and is considerably above the national average. However, the share of dropouts from primary and secondary education is relatively low. Yambol is the district with the lowest number of teachers in the country -76 per 1,000 students, compared to 87 teachers per 1,000 students nationally.

Students' results again remained extremely low in 2021. The average score in the external examination in mathematics after 7th grade was 35.0 points, versus 37.9 points in the country. The district also registered the lowest average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature, alongside Silistra and Montana -3.94 , compared to 4.21 in the country, and the share of "fail" grades (below 3.00) increased to 13%, against 7% nationally.

The number of university students is 7 per 1,000 people, against 32 per 1,000 people nationwide.

Healthcare

Although the number of GPs relative to the population in Yambol district is close to the national average, the number of specialist physicians is among the lowest in the country, followed only by that in Dobrich district. The number of hospital beds in the local general hospitals is also extremely low -3.54 beds per 1,000 people, compared to the national average of 5.52 beds per 1,000 people.

These figures probably account for the low number of hospitalizations in 2020 -100 per 1,000 people, versus 138 per 1,000 people countrywide. It can be assumed, therefore, that the residents seek medical care outside the district.

The coverage of the health system declined in 2020 and at 88.4%, it fell for the first time below the national average of 88.7%.

The infant mortality rate remains high.

Public order and security

In 2020, the workloads of the local criminal judges were lower than in the country, and the delivery of justice – speedier. One local criminal judge heard an average of 7.2 cases per month, compared to 8.6 per judge in the country. The share of pending cases dropped to 8%, versus the national average of 11%. The share of criminal cases closed within 3 months went up to reach 90%, which equaled the national average.

In 2020, the crime rate in the district continued to fall, and the detection rate to rise. Crimes against the person and property dropped to 9.0 per 1,000 persons, versus 9.9 per 1,000 persons nationally. The detection rate was among the highest in the whole country -66.9% , compared to 52.1% nationwide.

Environment

The relatively positive assessment of Yambol district in the environment category is mainly due to the small volumes of generated household waste and its management. In 2018, the amounts of household waste generated in the district were 317 kg/person, against the national average of 409 kg/person. 90% of the generated waste was handed over for treatment and recycling, compared to 71% on average countrywide.

The carbon dioxide emissions in the district remain low -9 t/sq. km.

There has been little change in the share of households with access to a public sewerage network, which in 2019 remained close to, though below the national average -71.9% , against 76.4% in the country. The share of households whose sewerage system is connected to a wastewater treatment plant was the lowest in the country -4.8% , compared to 64.6% countrywide.

Culture

The pandemic and the countrywide restrictions on visits to cultural events in 2020 had a powerful negative impact on cultural life in the district as well. There was a considerable shrinkage (by 93%, versus 71% nationally) in cinema visits, which dropped to a bare 8 per 1,000 persons, compared to 190 per 1,000 persons nationally. The reduction of museum and library visits was more limited and close to the national average – the former fell by 57%, compared to 58% in the country, and the latter by 39%, against 30% nationally. Both indicators remained below the country's average. Museum visits in 2020 amounted to 143 per 1,000 persons, versus 322 per 1,000 persons in the country, and library visits -274 per 1,000 persons, compared to 480 per 1,000 persons nationally.

Key indicators for the district of Yambol

| Indicators of economic development | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | National average |
|--|--------|--------|-------|------------------|
| GDP per capita (BGN, current prices) | 9,694 | 10,142 | n.a. | 17,170 |
| Average annual income per household member (BGN) | 5,357 | 5,638 | n.a. | 6,013 |
| Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN) | 10,815 | 12,048 | n.a. | 15,209 |
| Share of the population living below the national poverty line (%) | 24.3 | 33.2 | n.a. | 22.6 |
| Employment rate of the population aged 15–64 (%) | 62.3 | 63.1 | 63.2 | 68.5 |
| Unemployment rate of the population over 15 years of age (%) | 8.3 | 9.0 | (7.5) | 5.2 |
| Share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education (%) | 23.4 | 23.3 | 21.3 | 16.9 |
| Share of the population aged 25–64 with higher education (%) | 21.0 | 19.8 | 23.5 | 29.2 |
| Production value (BGN/person) | 15,014 | 16,153 | n.a. | 28,027 |
| Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets (BGN/person) | 1,683 | 1,777 | n.a. | 3,155 |
| Cumulative foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises (EUR/person) | 445 | 352 | n.a. | 3,655 |
| Share of households with Internet (%) | 62.1 | 53.4 | 63.1 | 78.9 |
| Share of roads in good condition (%) | 39.8 | 43.9 | n.a. | 41.4 |
| Road network density (km/100 sq. km territory) | 19.0 | 19.0 | 19.0 | 17.9 |
| AIP active transparency rating of local government bodies (%)* | 67.0 | 70.4 | 72.7 | 73.2 |

| Indicators of social development | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | National average |
|---|-------|-------|-------|------------------|
| Rate of natural increase (‰) | –8.9 | –8.7 | –11.5 | –9.5 |
| Net migration rate (‰) | –4.3 | –4.6 | 4.3 | 4.4 |
| Average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature** | 3.80 | 4.04 | 3.94 | 4.21 |
| Average grade in the National external exam in mathematics after 7th grade (points)** | 29.4 | 31.2 | 35.0 | 37.9 |
| Net enrolment of the population in 5th–8th grade (%) | 90.6 | 87.0 | 89.8 | 86.5 |
| Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students | 71 | 77 | 76 | 87 |
| Share of population with health insurance (%) | 89.3 | 89.8 | 88.4 | 88.7 |
| Population per one GP (number of people) | 1,575 | 1,701 | 1,771 | 1,727 |
| Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people | 10.5 | 9.6 | 9.0 | 9.9 |
| Workloads of criminal judges in office (cases/month) | 6.0 | 5.4 | 7.2 | 8.6 |
| Share of population living in settlements with public sewerage networks (%) | 71.8 | 71.9 | n.a. | 76.4 |
| Generated household waste per capita (kg/person/year) | 317 | n.a. | n.a. | 409 |
| Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%) | 89.8 | n.a. | n.a. | 70.9 |
| Visits to cinemas per 1,000 persons | 97 | 114 | 8 | 190 |
| Visits to museums per 1,000 persons | 292 | 329 | 143 | 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.