

Gabrovo district

- Population (2021)
- Territory (sq. km)
- Number of settlements
- Share of urban population (%)

103,404
2,023
349
79.9



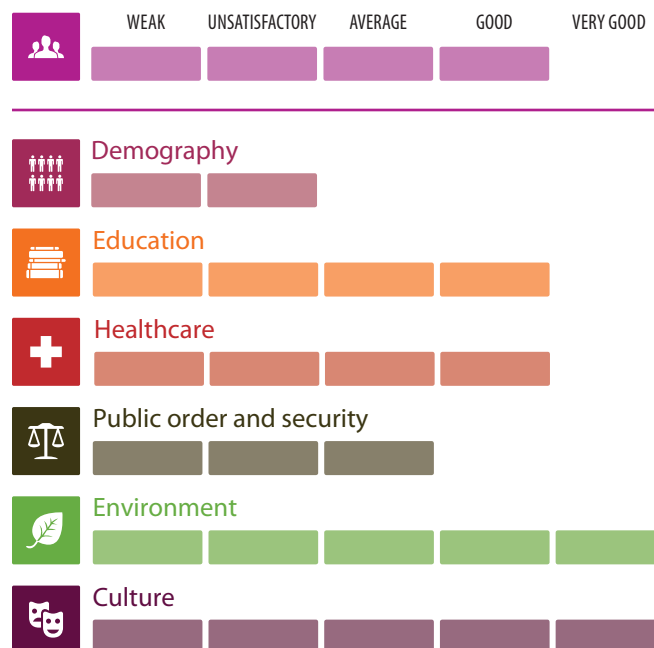
GDP, salaries, and incomes in Gabrovo district have continued to grow. Their indicator values determine the relatively low level of poverty in the district. Employment and unemployment rates remain less favorable than the national average. Business and investment activity in the area is high. Infrastructural development is very good. Although Gabrovo is among the highly developed economic areas, the level of local taxes is relatively low. The transparency of the local government in Gabrovo district is decreasing, but remains relatively high. Gabrovo is one of the districts with the most unfav-

orable demographic conditions. The results in the field of education are good. The indicators evaluating healthcare place the district among the top performers in the country. Gabrovo is among the districts with the highest share of health-insured persons. The district continues to be the leader as regards the share of cleared crimes. The relatively high share of the urban population explains the large share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems. Cultural life in Gabrovo district remains among the most intensive in the country.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and living standard

Gabrovo's performance in this category is traditionally very good and ranks the district immediately after the capital. In 2020, GDP continued to grow, reaching 14,700 BGN per capita, and was again the sixth highest in the country. Salaries and incomes also went up. The average annual gross salary of employed people reached 13,900 BGN.

These indicators are the prerequisite for the relatively low poverty levels in the district. The share of the population living with material deprivation decreased to 12.7%, compared to 19.4% in the country, and that of the people living below the national poverty line fell sharply to 12.3%, compared to 22.1% nationwide.

Labor market

Economic activity in the district fell slightly in 2021 but remained above the national average, with a rate of 72.5%, compared to 72.0% in the country. However, this growth was accompanied by both a decrease in employment and an increase in unemployment. Even though the changes are slight, these indicators remain less favourable than the country's averages. The employment rate reached 67.3%, compared to the national average of 68.1%, and the unemployment rate was 7.2%, versus 5.3% nationwide.

Gabrovo is among the districts with the lowest share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education – 11.7%, compared to 16.6% in the country. The district is also among those with the highest share of employed people with secondary education – 63.7%, compared to 53.8% in the country – which corresponds to its industrial profile.

A challenge still facing the labor market is the ageing of the population. In 2021, the demographic replacement rate as a ratio of the population aged 15–19 to that aged 60–64 was 56.1%, versus 69.4% 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 56 young people joining the work force.

Investment and economy

Business and investment activity in the district again remained high in 2020. The number of non-financial enterprises relative to the population continued to fall, in line with the general trend in the country, and reached 56 per 1,000 persons, against the national average of 60 per 1,000 persons. FTA acquisition expenditures also suffered the negative impact of the pandemic and the crisis. They shrank to 1,900 BGN/person, while the national average was 3,300 BGN/person. FDI, however, continued to increase and reached 3,300 EUR/person, thus placing the district fourth in the country, after the capital, Sofia district, and Burgas.

Gabrovo ranks second after the capital district in the utilization of EU funds. By 30 June 2022, payments made in the district to beneficiaries under EU operational programs reached 3,800 BGN/person. The top place in the district was held by Gabrovo city municipality with 4,700 BGN/person.

Infrastructure

The infrastructural development of Gabrovo district is very good. In 2021, Gabrovo was the district with the highest road network density in the country – 25.6 km/100 sq. km of territory, compared to 18.0 km/100 sq. km in the country, although the share of highways and first-class roads was lower than the national average – 16.6%, compared to 18.5% in the country.

The quality of the road surfaces was also lower and has been deteriorating in the past few years – 26% of them are in good condition, versus 42% in the country. Household access to the internet continues to increase and in 2021 it exceeded the national average – 83.7% in the district, versus 83.5% nationally.

Gabrovo ranks first in the country in terms of the share of households connected to a gas supply for 2021 – 11.8%, which is double the national average of 5.3%. The installed RES capacities are relatively limited.

Local taxes

Although Gabrovo is among the districts with a relatively highly developed economy, in 2022 the level of local taxes again remained relatively low. The margin is especially big in the retail trade tax. Its average rate across all the municipalities in Gabrovo district is 8.67 BGN/sq. m, against 12.99 BGN/sq. m countrywide. The tax rate on non-gratuitous acquisition of property is also considerably lower in the district compared to that in the country.

Within the district, Gabrovo city municipality levies the highest local taxes, while the lowest rates are in the municipality of Tryavna.

Administration

In 2021, the cadastral map covered practically the whole of Gabrovo district's territory. However, the self-assessment of the local authorities on the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop-shop administrative services went up in 2022 but while the self-assessment on e-government continues to be relatively high, that on the provision of one-stop-shop administrative services still lags behind the average ones in the country.

The AIP active transparency ratings of the local administration in Gabrovo district fell in 2022 but remained relatively high at 72.9%, compared to the national average of 70.2%.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ■■■■■

Demography ■■■

Gabrovo is one of the districts whose demographic picture in 2021 was once again among the most unfavorable in the country. The natural population growth rate reached a new negative record at -22.1‰, compared to the national average of -13.2‰, and was the third worst in the country, after that in the districts of Vidin and Montana. In 2021, the net migration rate was also negative, with a rate of -0.8‰.

The trend towards population ageing is clearly visible in the age dependency ratios. In 2021, Gabrovo overtook Vidin and settled at the top place nationally for the highest age dependency of the population aged 65+ to that aged 0–14, which was 249.6%, compared to 149.3% in the country. The age dependency of the population aged 65+ to that aged 15–64 was 49.2%, versus 34.0% nationally.

Most of the population of the district is urban – 79.9%, compared to a national average of 73.1%, but its density is relatively low, with 1,191 persons/sq. km, compared to 1,489 persons/sq. km countywide.

Education ■■■■■

The performance of Gabrovo district in the education category is good. In 2021, it was once again one of the districts with a very high rate of enrolment in 5th–7th grade. The percentage of school year repeaters has gone up but remains relatively low. In 2021, the number of teachers in primary and secondary education in the district went up and for the first time in eight years exceeded the national average, reaching 99 teachers per 1,000 students, compared to 97 per 1,000 students countrywide.

In 2022, the district's average score in the external examination in mathematics at the end of 7th grade was 30.9 points, compared to 35.3 points in the country. Results in the State matriculation exams in Bulgarian language and literature were below the national average – “Good” 3.87, versus 3.97 nationally, but the share of “fail” (below 3.00) grades continues to be relatively low – 15.6%, against 17% nationwide.

Gabrovo remains among the districts with the highest and still rising number of university students, reaching 46 per 1,000 persons, against 32 per 1,000 persons in the country.

Healthcare ■■■■■

The indicators evaluating healthcare place the district among the top performers in the country, where it is preceded only by the districts of Pleven and Kyustendil.

In 2021, Gabrovo again remained among the districts with the highest share of health-insured persons– 96.9%, versus 88.7% as the national average. The relative number of GPs is considerably higher than the national average, but specialist physicians are scarce. The number of beds in the local general hospitals has continued to rise but it still stands below the national average – 5.24 beds per 1,000 persons in the district, compared to 5.62 beds per 1,000 persons nationally.

The number of patients treated in the local hospitals remains relatively low – 202.8 per 1,000 persons, compared to 222.6 per 1,000 persons countrywide. The infant mortality rate in the district has been increasing and is higher than the national average.

Public order and security ■■■■

Although court workloads in Gabrovo district remained lower than the national average in 2021, this did not have a significant effect on the speedy delivery of justice. One local judge heard an average of 6.9 criminal cases per month, compared to 9.0 cases per judge in the country, while the share of cases completed within 3 months was 86%, versus 89% nationally.

In 2021, the number of registered crimes against the person and property increased and exceeded the national average, with 10.4 crimes per 1,000 persons in the district, compared to 9.8 per 1,000 people in the country. At the same time, however, Gabrovo continues to be the country's leader in the crime detection rate, with 74.9% of detected crimes, versus 51.7% on average for the whole country.

Environment ■■■■■

The performance of Gabrovo district in the environment indicators is very good and places it second in the whole country. The relatively high urban population accounts for the high number of households living in settlements with access to a public sewerage network – 84.1%, compared to 76.3% in the country, and to sewerage networks connected to wastewater treatment plants – 73.6%, versus 66.7% nationwide.

In 2020, the volume of generated household waste in the district decreased slightly, but nevertheless remained relatively high – an annual of 416 kg/person, against 409 kg/person in the country. At the same time, however, the share of waste handed over for treatment and recycling remained high at 76.6%, compared to 69.3% in the country.

The share of forest areas is close to the national average, but that of disturbed areas is considerably smaller.

Culture ■■■■■

In spite of the countrywide restrictions imposed in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, Gabrovo district's cultural life remains among the most intensive in the country and is outranked only by the capital district. The main reason for this is the extremely high number of visits to museums, although, similarly to the country's average, in 2020 this number had also shrunk by over 50%. It rose to 2,357 per 1,000 persons in 2021, yet this number cannot yet make up for the earlier shrinkage. Nevertheless, it remains far above the national average of 426 per 1,000 people.

The number of theatre visits also went up in 2021 to reach 160 per 1,000 persons, compared to 129 per 1,000 persons nationally. Libraries and cinemas in the district have been attracting more and more people but the number of visits relative to the population remains comparatively low.

Key indicators for the district of Gabrovo

Economic Development Indicators	2019	2020	2021	National average
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (BGN, current prices)	14,519	14,651	n.a.	17,299
Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN)	12,895	13,902	n.a.	16,687
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	17.8	22.3	12.3	22.1
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	73.4	72.8	72.5	72.0
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	70.1	67.7	67.3	68.1
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	(4.5)	(7.0)	(7.2)	5.3
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with primary or lower education (%)	12.6	10.6	11.7	16.6
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with higher education (%)	29.0	23.1	24.6	29.6
Production value (BGN/person)	24,907	24,891	n.a.	27,213
Expenditures for acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN/person)	2,244	1,892	n.a.	3,348
Foreign direct investment to non-financial enterprises, per capita (cumulative) (EUR/person)	3,210	3,273	n.a.	3,877
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	74.9	77.5	83.7	83.5
Share of roads in good condition (%)	36.7	26.5	26.5	42.0
Road network density (km/100 sq. m territory)	24.9	25.6	25.6	18.0
Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies (%)*	74.8	78.9	72.9	70.2

Social Development Indicators	2019	2020	2021	National average
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-12.7	-18.1	-22.1	-13.2
Net migration rate (‰)	-4.2	10.5	-0.8	1.9
Average grades in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	4.31	4.19	3.87	3.97
Average grade in the National external examination in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	33.9	33.4	30.9	35.3
Net enrolment rate of the population (5th to 7th grade) (%)	93.4	100.0	90.5	85.9
Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students	80	79	99	97
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	97.5	96.3	96.9	88.7
Number of people per general practitioner	1,501	1,609	1,567	1,734
Crimes against the person and property per 1,000 persons	10.5	9.6	10.4	9.8
Actual workload of penal judges in the district court (cases/month)	6.4	5.8	6.9	9.0
Share of population living in settlements with public sewerage systems (%)	85.1	84.1	n.a.	76.3
Household waste generated per capita of serviced population (kg/person/year)	418	416	n.a.	409
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	76.5	76.6	n.a.	69.3
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people of the average annual population	402	109	209	351
Number of visits to museums per 1,000 people of the average annual population	3,812	1,800	2,357	426

* The 2021 data are included in the 2022 study.

** The data refer to the 2021-22 academic year, while the State matriculation exams took place in 2022. The same is valid of the previous years.