

Kyustendil district

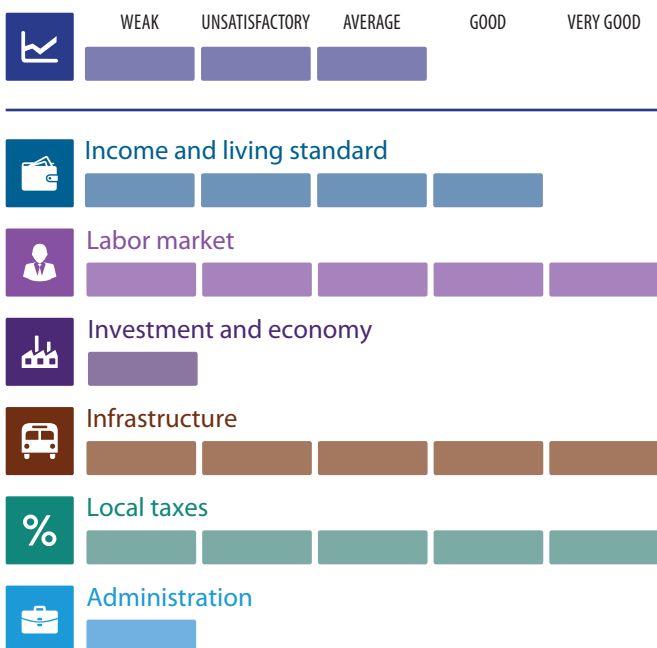
► Population (2021)	113,440
► Territory (sq. km)	3,052
► Number of settlements	182
► Share of urban population (%)	69.7



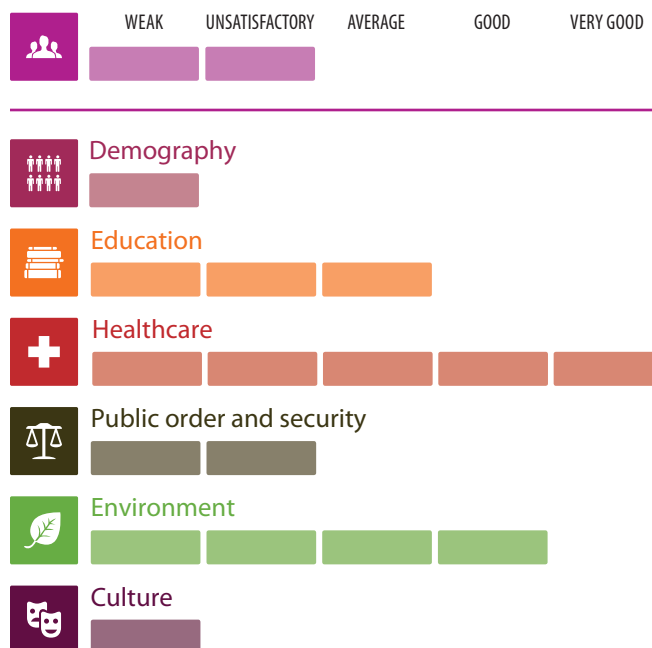
GDP per capita, salaries, and incomes in Kyustendil district have been growing but their levels remain relatively low. Economic activity and employment rates have exceeded the average ones in the country for the first time in the past few years. Investment in Kyustendil district is among the lowest in the country. The density of the road and railway networks in the district remains higher than the national average. The average rate of local taxes in the district's municipalities is relatively low. Kyustendil is the district with the worst performance in the indicators assessing the work of the local administration.

Kyustendil is among the districts with the fastest ageing populations. Students' results in 2022 again remained unsatisfactory. Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest number of GPs, and the lowest infant mortality rate. Its performance in the field of justice is among the poorest in the country. The workload of the local criminal judges is the highest in the country, but the speed of delivery of justice is relatively high. The amounts of generated household waste are low. At the same time, however, a relatively small portion of this waste is handed over for treatment and recycling. Cultural life remains 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 2020 again remained lower than in the country – 9,600 BGN/person, compared to the national average of 17,300 BGN. Salaries and incomes have also gone up, but they remain below the national averages. The annual gross salary of employed people reached 11,500 BGN/person, compared to the national average of 16,700 BGN. The rise in incomes, on the other hand, has an immediate effect on the level of poverty in the district. The share of the population living with material deprivation has decreased to 9.3% (versus 19.4% in the country), and that of the population living below the national poverty line – to 17.9% (versus 22.1% in the country).

Labor market ■■■■

The labor market in the district showed a number of positive trends in 2021. Economic activity and employment rates grew significantly and for the first time in the past few years exceeded the national averages. The rate of economic activity increased to 74.5%, against 72.0% in the country, and that of employment reached 72.5%, versus 68.1% in the country. The unemployment rate, on the other hand, remained low.

Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest share of the workforce with secondary education – 69.7%, compared to 53.8% in the country, which is in line with the district's industrial profile. The proportion of people aged 25–64 with a university degree is 23.9%, versus 29.6% nationally, while the share of those with primary or lower education is the second lowest in the country, after that in the capital – 6.4%, against 16.6% nationally.

The labor market in the district continues to face the challenge of population ageing. The population replacement rate as a ratio of the population aged 15–19 to that aged 60–64 is 53.9%, compared to 69.4% in the country. This means that for every 100 people who are about to leave the labour market in the next few years, there will be only 54 young people joining the workforce.

Investment and economy ■■

Investment activity in Kyustendil district again remained among the lowest in the country for 2020. The number of nonfinancial enterprises was 52 per 1,000 persons, against the national average of 60 per 1,000 persons. In addition, in 2020 the district registered an outflow of foreign and domestic investment and a shrinkage of production volumes. FTA acquisition expenditures per person dropped to 807 BGN/person, versus the national figure of 3,300 BGN/person. For its part, FDI fell to 350 EUR/person, compared to the national average

of 3,900 EUR/person. Production value in Kyustendil district shrank to only 12,500 BGN/person, against 27,200 BGN/person as the national average.

Utilization of European funds is also lagging behind, though its annual rate of increase is among the highest in the country. By 30 June 2022, payments made in the district to beneficiaries of EU operational programs amounted to 1,492 BGN/person. Within the district, the municipality with the highest amount of utilized EU funding was Rila.

Infrastructure ■■■■

The density of the road and railway networks in the district again remained higher than the national averages for 2021. 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 – 55% of, compared to the average of 42% nationwide.

Households' internet access in the district rose sharply and in 2021 it was 77.3%, compared to the national average of 83.5%. Higher than average was the share of households connected to a gas supply – 7.5%, against 5.3% in the country. The installed RES capacities were 0.396 KW/person, compared to the national average of 0.615 KW/person.

Local taxes ■■■■

In 2022, the average level of the local taxes in the municipalities of Kyustendil district has again remained among the lowest in the country. The biggest margin is 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 is 9.83 BGN/sq. m, versus 12.99 BGN/sq. m in the country. The tax rate for taxi transportation is also considerably lower than the national average.

Within the district, the municipality with the lowest rates is that of Nevestino, and those with the highest are the municipalities of Rila and Boboshevo.

Administration ■■

Kyustendil is the district with the worst performance in the indicators assessing the work of the local administration. The self-assessments of the local administrations for the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop-shop services are among the lowest in the country and in 2022 they even dropped slightly.

In 2022, the AIP Active transparency rating of the local administration has also dropped and now is the lowest one in the country – 50%, compared to the national average of 70.2%.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ■■■

Demography ■■

Demographic development in Kyustendil district is among the weakest in the country. The rate of natural population growth has continued its rapid decrease and in 2021 it reached -22.0‰ (against -13.2‰ in the country). Like almost all districts, in 2020 Kyustendil managed to attract settlers and the mechanical growth rate was positive for the first time in at least two decades. However, this trend did not prove to be permanent and in 2021 it was again negative, with a value of -5.7‰.

Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest rate of population ageing, preceded only by Vidin, Gabrovo, and Smolyan 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 229.1%, compared to 149.3% in the country on average, and that of people aged 65+ to those aged 15-64 was 46.2%, versus the national average of 34.0%.

The urban population is 69.7%, which is close to, but below the national average of 73.1%, but population density is relatively low – 1,078 persons/sq. km, against 1,489 persons/sq. km in the country on average.

Education ■■■■

In 2021, the rate of enrolment in 5th–7th grade went up and at 92.9%, it again remained higher than the national average of 85.9%. The number of primary and secondary school teachers relative to student numbers has gone up and remains close to but still below the national average.

The performance of the students in Kyustendil district in 2022 again remained unsatisfactory. Their average score in the external examination in mathematics at the end of 7th grade was 28.2 points, compared to 35.3 points in the country. The average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature was “Good” 3.76, compared to the average of 3.97 nationally. The number of “fail” grades (below 3.00) was 21.7%, versus 17.0% as the national average.

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

Healthcare ■■■■■■

The performance of Kyustendil district in the field of healthcare is among the best in the country. The share of people with health insurance in the district is traditionally relatively high – in 2021 it was 96.8%, compared to 88.7% in the country. The number of beds in the local general hospitals also remained higher, albeit slightly, than the national average – 5.71 beds per 1,000 people, against 5.62 per 1,000 people in the country. Kyustendil is among the districts with the highest relative number of GPs, with one GP per 1,493 people, versus one GP per 1,734 in the country, but there is a relative shortage of specialist physicians.

The infant mortality rate has been declining and in 2021 it was the lowest in the country – 1.3‰, against 5.6‰ as the national average. The number of patients treated in the local general hospitals also remains below average – 183.9 per 1,000 people, compared to 222.6 per 1,000 people in the country.

Public order and security ■■■

The workloads of criminal judges in Kyustendil district are among the heaviest in the country, with 12.3 cases a month per judge on average, compared to 9.0 cases nationally in 2021. Nevertheless, the speed of delivery of justice is relatively high. The proportion of criminal cases closed within 3 months is 94%, against the national average of 89%, and the share of pending cases is 8.2%, versus 11.8% countrywide.

Both the crime rate and the detection rate in the district are close to the national average. In 2021, the registered crimes against the person and property were 9.6 per 1,000 persons, versus 9.8 per 1,000 persons on average nationwide. The detection rate in the district reached 48.8%, versus the national figure of 51.7%.

Environment ■■■■■■

The amount of household waste in Kyustendil district is among the lowest in the country – 245 kg/person per annum, compared to the average of 409 kg/person in the country for 2020. At the same time, the share handed over for treatment and recycling is low – 31.1%, versus the national average of 69.3%.

Close to, though slightly below the national average, is the proportion of the population with access to a public sewerage network – 72.3%, versus the national average of 76.3%, and of that with a sewerage system connected to a wastewater treatment plant – 62.1%, versus 66.7% countrywide.

The share of forest areas is relatively high – 42.0% against 33.1% in the country, but the share of disturbed areas is also above the national average – 0.67%, against 0.42% for the country in 2021.

Culture ■■

In 2021, cultural life in Kyustendil district again retained its low intensity. The pandemic and the restrictions on cultural events in the country in 2020 had an even worse effect in the district, while the recovery in 2021 could not compensate for the sharp drop of the previous year. The relative number of cinema visits reached 48 per 1,000 persons, against 129 per 1,000 persons nationwide. Museums attracted more interest and visits to them remained above the national average; however, their number remained half that of pre-pandemic times. In 2021, their relative number was 521 per 1,000 persons, versus the national average of 426 per 1,000 persons. Visits to libraries also increased, though remaining only half the national average.

Key indicators for the district of Kyustendil

Economic Development Indicators	2019	2020	2021	National average
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (BGN, current prices)	9,517	9,616	n.a.	17,299
Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN)	10,576	11,519	n.a.	16,687
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	32.9	21.8	17.9	22.1
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	69.4	69.2	74.5	72.0
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	67.6	66.0	72.5	68.1
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	(2.6)	(4.6)	(2.8)	5.3
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with primary or lower education (%)	5.6	7.1	6.4	16.6
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with higher education (%)	21.5	24.0	23.9	29.6
Production value (BGN/person)	12,831	12,473	n.a.	27,213
Expenditures for acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN/person)	1,070	807	n.a.	3,348
Foreign direct investment to non-financial enterprises, per capita (cumulative) (EUR/person)	372	350	n.a.	3,877
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	62.5	78.6	77.3	83.5
Share of roads in good condition (%)	54.6	54.0	55.3	42.0
Road network density (km/100 sq. m territory)	20.6	20.4	20.1	18.0
Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies (%)*	56.9	61.9	50.0	70.2

Social Development Indicators	2019	2020	2021	National average
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-13.2	-17.2	-22.0	-13.2
Net migration rate (‰)	-4.8	14.7	-5.7	1.9
Average grades in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	4.08	4.04	3.76	3.97
Average grade in the National external examination in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	30.0	31.4	28.2	35.3
Net enrolment rate of the population (5th to 7th grade) (%)	89.8	88.6	92.9	85.9
Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students	88	91	96	97
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	97.0	95.6	96.8	88.7
Number of people per general practitioner	1,426	1,478	1,493	1,734
Crimes against the person and property per 1,000 persons	11.7	9.6	9.6	9.8
Actual workload of penal judges in the district court (cases/month)	11.0	11.8	12.3	9.0
Share of population living in settlements with public sewerage systems (%)	72.7	72.3	n.a.	76.3
Household waste generated per capita of serviced population (kg/person/year)	228	245	n.a.	409
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	33.7	31.1	n.a.	69.3
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people of the average annual population	273	43	48	351
Number of visits to museums per 1,000 people of the average annual population	1,094	312	521	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.