Shumen district

▸ Population (2021)	169,423
▸ Territory (sq. km)	3,390
▸ Number of settlements	151
▸ Share of urban population (%)	60.0

Map showing municipalities: KAOLINOVO, Venets, Nikola Kozlevo, Hitrino, NOVI PAZAR, SHUMEN, KASPICHAN, VELIKI PRESLAV, SMYADOVO, Varbitsa
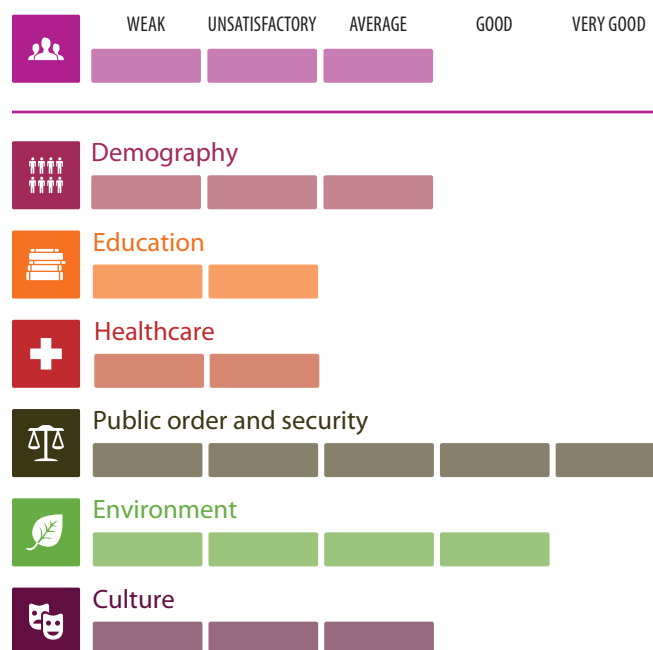
The growth of incomes and salaries in Shumen district has continued, thus leading to a decrease in poverty levels. Employment is falling and unemployment is rising, with both indicators remaining less favorable than average. Investment activity in the district remains relatively slack. Shumen is the district with the highest share of first-class roads and highways in the country. The municipalities in the district have kept local taxes relatively low. The AIP active transparency rating of the local government bodies has gone up considerably.

Both the natural population growth and the net migration rate are decreasing. Students' performance is still poor. Healthcare suffers from a shortage of doctors and hospital beds. The workloads of the local criminal judges remain low and this has a favorable effect on the speed of delivery of justice. The high assessment of Shumen district in the environment category is due mostly to the low volumes of household waste and its management. The number of visits to local cinemas and museums is increasing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

	WEAK	UNSATISFACTORY	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
	■	■	■		

Income and living standard	■	■	■	■	
Labor market	■	■	■		
Investment and economy	■				
Infrastructure	■	■	■	■	■
Local taxes	■	■	■	■	
Administration	■	■	■		

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

	WEAK	UNSATISFACTORY	AVERAGE	GOOD	VERY GOOD
	■	■	■		

Demography	■	■	■		
Education	■	■			
Healthcare	■	■			
Public order and security	■	■	■	■	■
Environment	■	■	■		
Culture	■	■	■		

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and living standard

The growth of GDP per capita in Shumen district has continued, reaching 10,500 BGN/person and placing the district around the middle but still in the lower half of the ranking scale for this indicator in 2020. Incomes and salaries have also continued to rise. The average gross annual salary of employed people is 13,300 BGN, versus 16,700 BGN in the country.

The share of the population below the national poverty line has gone down and is now considerably below the national average – 15.4%, compared to 22.1% in the country. The share of people living with material deprivation is identical to the country's average –19.4%.

Labor market

Economic activity in the district remained relatively high in 2021 – 74.8%, compared to 72.0% in the country, which is practically at the same level as in the previous year. At the same time, employment is falling and unemployment is rising, with both indicators continuing to be less favorable than in the country on average. The employment rate decreased to 64.1%, against 68.1% in the country, and the unemployment rate increased to 14.2%, versus 5.3% nationally.

A challenge still facing the labor market in Shumen district is the educational structure of the workforce. The share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education has increased slightly to 27.8%, against the national average of 16.6%. The share of those with a university degree has also increased slightly, reaching 24.2%, compared to 29.6% in the country.

In 2021, the population replacement rate as a ratio of the population aged 15–19 to that aged 60–64 was 66.8%, compared to 69.4% in the country. This means that for every 100 people who are about to leave the labor market, there are 67 young people who will join the workforce.

Investment and economy

Investment activity in Shumen district again remained relatively slack in 2020. The number of enterprises in Shumen district was small – 41 per 1,000 persons, against 60 per 1,000 persons nationally. FTA acquisition expenditures, as well as FDI, were at a standstill and remained considerably lower than in the country. FTA acquisition expenditures amounted to 1,800 BGN/person, compared to 3,300 BGN/person in the country, and FDI was 686 EUR/person, compared to 3,900 EUR/person in the country.

The above figures have resulted in relatively low production value – 16,600 BGN/person, compared to 27,200 BGN/person nationally.

Shumen is also among the districts with relatively low utilization of European funds. By 30 June 2022, payments made in the district to beneficiaries of EU operational programs amounted to 1,898 BGN/person. Within the district, the highest amounts were utilized by the municipality of Novi Pazar.

Infrastructure

The density of the road and railway networks in Shumen district is higher than the national average. Shumen is also the district with the largest amount of first-class roads and highways in the country for 2021 – 36.4%, compared to 18.5% in the country. Road quality has also improved but remains below the national average, with road surfaces in good condition making up 38%, versus 42% in the country.

Household access to the internet has increased to 84.6% and remains higher than in the country (83.5%). The share of households connected to a gas supply is close to the national average – 4.9% in the district, against 5.3% nationally. The installed RES capacities are significantly below the national average.

Local taxes

The municipalities in Shumen district again kept the levels of local taxes relatively low in 2022. The average rates higher than the respective national averages were those on immovable non-residential property for legal entities and on motor vehicles. At the same time, the taxes on taxi transportation, non-gratuitous acquisition of property, and retail trade were significantly lower.

Within the district, the highest local taxes are levied by the municipalities of Novi Pazar and Kaolinovo, and the lowest – by those of Hitrino and Nikola Kozlevo.

Administration

In line with the progress made throughout the country, the coverage of the cadastral map in Shumen has increased significantly in recent years. In 2021 it already included 97.8% of the district's territory, against 97.4% nationally.

The self-assessments of the local administrations for the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop-shop services again remained relatively low in 2022. At the same time, the AIP active transparency rating of the municipalities in the district went up considerably and exceeded the country's average – 76.1% in the district, compared to 70.2% nationally.

🧑‍🤝‍🧑 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ▪▪▪

🏛 Demography ▪▪▪

In 2021, both the natural population growth and the net migration rate decreased. The natural population growth rate dropped to –15.1‰, compared to –13.2‰ nationally. The net migration rate went down, but over the past few years it has remained positive – 1.3‰ in 2021.

The age dependency rate as a ratio between the population aged 65+ to those aged 0–14 reached 161.9%, compared to the national average of 149.3%, and to the 15–19 age group it was 34.7%, versus 34.0% in the country.

The urban population, as well as population density again remained low in 2021. The share of population living in urban settlements was 60.0%, versus the national average of 73.1%; population density was 873 persons/sq. km, compared to 1,489 people/sq. km on average countrywide.

📚 Education ▪▪

The coverage of the education system has been declining and moving further away from the national average. In 2021, the net enrolment in 5th–7th grade was 79.6%, against 85.9% nationally. The shares of repeaters and dropouts from primary and secondary education have maintained levels close to the respective national averages. The number of teachers has been on the increase and remains relatively high. In 2021, the teachers in primary and secondary schools numbered 105 per 1,000 students, compared to 97 teachers per 1,000 students in the country.

In 2021, students' results again remained among the lowest in the country. The average score in the external examination in mathematics after 7th grade was 27.0 points, versus 35.3 points in the country. The average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature was "Good" 3.58, compared to 3.97 in the country, and the share of "fail" grades (below 3.00) was 27.2%, against 17% nationally.

The number of university students has gone up to 41 per 1,000 persons, remaining higher than the national average of 32 students per 1,000 persons.

➕ Healthcare ▪▪

The healthcare system in Shumen district suffers from a shortage of doctors and hospital beds. The number of doctors – both GPs and specialist physicians – is below the national average. In 2021, there was one GP per 1,862 persons, compared to 1,734 persons per doctor nationally. The number of beds in the district's general hospitals remained extremely low, with 2.92 beds per 1,000 persons, compared to 5.62 beds per 1,000 persons in the country. The number of hospitalizations was much lower than in the country – 102.2 persons per 1,000 persons in 2020, compared to the national average of 222.6 per 1,000 persons. This suggests that the residents may be seeking medical care outside the district.

Infant mortality remained relatively high in 2021 – 8.2‰, compared to the national average of 5.6‰.

The share of the population with health insurance went up in 2020, but it still remains below the national average.

⚖ Public order and security ▪▪▪▪▪

The workloads of criminal judges in the district remained low in 2021, which had a favorable effect on the speed of delivery of justice. One criminal judge heard an average of 7.6 cases per month, compared to an average of 9.0 cases per judge in the country. The relative share of criminal cases closed within 3 months reached 95%, against 89% nationally, and that of pending cases was the lowest in the country – 2.7%, against 11.8% countrywide.

The crime rate in Shumen district is low, and the detection rate is high. The crimes against the person and property registered in 2021 amounted to 8.7 per 1,000 persons, compared to 9.8 per 1,000 persons nationally. The proportion of cleared crimes was 62.4%, against 51.7% nationally.

🌿 Environment ▪▪▪▪

The high assessment of Shumen district in the environment category is mostly due to the relatively low volumes of household waste and its management. In 2020, the amount of household waste generated in the district was 363 kg/person, compared to the national average of 409 kg/person, and 94.1% of the total generated quantities were handed over for treatment and recycling, versus 69.3% nationally.

There has been little change in the share of households with access to a public sewerage network, which remains low. In 2020, it reached 57.3%, against 76.3% in the country. The share of households whose sewerage system is connected to a wastewater treatment plant was 53.6%, compared to 66.7% countrywide.

The share of forest areas is close to the national average, but that of disturbed areas is rather more limited.

🎭 Culture ▪▪▪

The pandemic and the restrictions on cultural events have affected cultural life in the district as well, and this is clearly manifested in the data for 2021. Visits to cinemas rose to 68 per 1,000 persons, versus 351 per 1,000 persons in the country. Visits to museums in the district also increased to a level above the national average relative to population, although numbers may not yet have managed to reach pre-pandemic levels. A decrease is visible in the visits to theaters and libraries. Visits to theaters reached 43 per 1,000 persons, compared to 129 per 1,000 persons in the country, and visits to libraries – 915 per 1,000 persons, which is significantly higher than the average number in the country – 449 per 1,000 persons.

Key indicators for the district of Shumen

Economic Development Indicators	2019	2020	2021	National average
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (BGN, current prices)	10,230	10,475	n.a.	**17,299**
Average annual gross salary per employed person (BGN)	12,124	13,345	n.a.	**16,687**
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	29.1	21.5	15.4	**22.1**
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	74.2	75.0	74.8	**72.0**
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	66.6	66.5	64.1	**68.1**
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	10.1	11.3	14.2	**5.3**
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with primary or lower education (%)	29.5	27.1	27.8	**16.6**
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with higher education (%)	23.7	24.6	24.2	**29.6**
Production value (BGN/person)	16,722	16,613	n.a.	**27,213**
Expenditures for acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN/person)	1,804	1,777	n.a.	**3,348**
Foreign direct investment to non-financial enterprises, per capita (cumulative) (EUR/person)	665	686	n.a.	**3,877**
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	77.3	82.5	84.6	**83.5**
Share of roads in good condition (%)	45.9	34.6	37.6	**42.0**
Road network density (km/100 sq. m territory)	18.2	18.2	18.2	**18.0**
Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies (%)*	65.4	66.4	76.1	**70.2**

Social Development Indicators	2019	2020	2021	National average
Rate of natural increase (‰)	−7.4	−11.0	−15.1	**−13.2**
Net migration rate (‰)	6.9	8.2	1.3	**1.9**
Average grades in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	3.96	3.98	3.58	**3.97**
Average grade in the National external examination in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	29.6	30.4	27.0	**35.3**
Net enrolment rate of the population (5th to 7th grade) (%)	83.1	82.4	79.6	**85.9**
Number of teachers in primary and secondary schools per 1,000 students	100	101	105	**97**
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	88.9	87.9	88.1	**88.7**
Number of people per general practitioner	1,833	1,911	1,862	**1,734**
Crimes against the person and property per 1,000 persons	9.3	7.9	8.7	**9.8**
Actual workload of penal judges in the district court (cases/month)	6.2	6.3	7.6	**9.0**
Share of population living in settlements with public sewerage systems (%)	58.0	57.3	n.a.	**76.3**
Household waste generated per capita of serviced population (kg/person/year)	363	363	n.a.	**409**
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	94.1	94.1	n.a.	**69.3**
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people of the average annual population	111	22	68	**351**
Number of visits to museums per 1,000 people of the average annual population	1,162	623	793	**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.