

# Targovishte

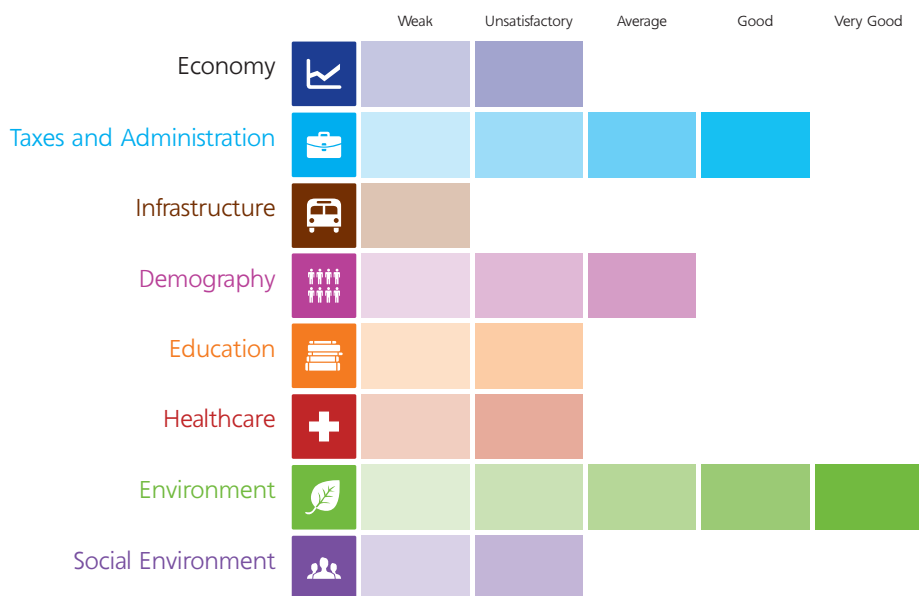
Population (2013)	118 253
Area (sq. km.)	2 558.5
Number of settlements	199
Share of urban population (%)	54.2



## Overview

Following the downturn in the beginning of the economic crisis, the economy of Targovishte District has gradually recovered in next years and even at a faster rate than the rest of the country. A slight outflow of foreign investments in non-financial enterprises was reported in 2012, which has been accompanied by a drop in the employment rate for the period 2012–2013. Targovishte District was one of the six districts featuring more than 50% of good quality roads in 2013, which is an important prerequisite for its development. The businesses' assessments of the performance of local administration are a bit higher than the country's average. A relatively big proportion of businesses has used e-services provided by the local administration.

Targovishte District's population has decreased faster than the county's average for the past ten years, but the age structure of the population has still remained more favourable than the one in most districts. The sharp shortage of health professionals constitutes the main reason for the poor assessment of Targovishte District.



## Economy

GDP per capita in Targovishte District was 6,179 BGN in 2011, which was rather lower than its national counterpart (10,248 BGN). Nonetheless, following the downturn in the beginning of the economic crisis when GDP per capita decreased to 5,056 BGN, the economy has gradually recovered in following years and even at a faster rate than the country's average. A slight outflow of foreign investments in non-financial enterprises was observed in 2012, which has been accompanied by a drop in the employment rate. The employment rate of the population aged 15+ decreased again in 2013 and reached 38.2%, which constituted the third lowest value of the employment rate following the ones of the districts of Lovech and Silistra. Targovishte District together with Sliven District features the lowest average annual income per household member. In 2013, it was 3,025 BGN compared to the country's average of 4,814 BGN. The income growth rate in Targovishte has lagged behind by approximately 34% compared to its national counterpart for the past ten years.

The structure of the economy is considerably different compared to the rest of the country. In 2011, agriculture accounted for 15.3% of the gross value added in the district (compared with 5.4% for the country), industry accounted for 37% (compared to the national average of 30.5%), and services – 47.6% (compared to the country's average of 64.1%).

The municipalities of Targovishte District have drawn EU funds under operational programmes totalling 399.7 BGN per capita as at 31 January 2014, which has been above the country's average. The municipality of Popovo has performed the best (1,125.9 BGN per capita), and the municipality of Antonovo has performed the worst (138.4 BGN per capita).

## Taxes and administration

The businesses' assessments of the performance of local administration are a bit higher than the country's average – 3.2 points compared to the country's average of 3.1/5. The speed of providing services has been assessed relatively the lowest, and the application of clear requirements and incorruptibility of officers – the highest. According to businesses, corruption in Targovishte District (3.2 points) is slightly lower than the country's average (3.1 points). The labour inspectorate and the police have been perceived as the least corrupt among local institutions, and the local administration has received the poorest result.

The survey showed that 46.7% of business representatives have used e-services provided by the local administration for the past year till May 2014. This share is bigger than the national average (38.6%) and it ranks Targovishte fifth after the districts of Burgas, Ruse, Sofia and Sofia City.

2014 Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies by the 'Access to Information Program' Foundation ranked Targovishte District above the average level for Bulgaria with 44.4 points, the average being 44.1 points, though this result is far behind the maximum of 82.4 points. The municipalities of Popovo and Targovishte are the most transparent (51.4 and 51.1 points respectively), and the transparency of the municipality of Opaka has the worst assessment of transparency – 17.1 points.

## Infrastructure

Targovishte was one of the six districts featuring more than 50% of good quality roads in 2013. Nevertheless, the share of roads in good condition has decreased from 58% in 2012 to 52% in 2013.

Targovishte District has been ranked relatively low in this category due to the low railway network density and due to the limited dissemination and use of the internet. In 2013, 53.7% of all households in Bulgaria had access to the internet, and the relative share thereof was 29.4% in Targovishte District. The difference in the share of people using the internet has been similar. In 2013, 56.2% of the population in Bulgaria aged 16–74 stated that they had used the internet the previous year, and this proportion for Targovishte was 36.6%.

## Demographics

Targovishte District's population has decreased faster than the county's average – it has dropped more than 20,000 people for the last ten years or more than 15%. The high intensity of emigration constitutes the main reason for this difference. The net migration is negative and amounts to minus 3.2‰. The rate of natural increase was minus 5.8‰ in Targovishte and was also lower than the country's average (minus 5.2‰) in 2013.

The relatively high share of agriculture in the district's economy also implies the higher share of the population living in smaller settlements. In 2013, the relative share of urban population was 54.2% compared to the country's average of 73%; this ranks Targovishte fourth in terms of the smallest share of urban population following the districts of Kardzhali, Razgrad and Silistra.

In 2013, Targovishte was second (after Sliven) in respect of the coefficient of demographic replacement represented as the ratio of the population aged 15–19 to the population aged 60–64 – 71% compared to 61.5% for Bulgaria. That means that 71 youngsters per hundred retired people will be joining the labour market next several years.

## Education

Although the net enrolment rate of the population (grades 5th through 8th) has traditionally been higher than the national average (it reached 82.2% in 2013 compared to 79.9% for the country), the relative share of dropouts from primary and secondary education has remained almost twice as high. In 2012, 4.5% of pupils in Targovishte District dropped out of school compared to the country's average of 2.3%. A negative trend has been observed in respect of repeaters. While it was 0.6% in the district compared to 0.9% for Bulgaria in 2011, in 2012, it equalled the national average of 0.9% and grew to 1.4% in 2013 compared to 1.0% for the country.

The indicators on education quality have also ranked Targovishte District relatively unfavourably. The share of failed students at state matriculation exams was 6.9% in 2014 in the district compared to Bulgaria's average of 4.8%. The average grade at state matriculation exams was Good (4.00) in 2014 compared to Good (4.3) for the country.

The relative share of the population with tertiary education, aged 25–64, remained small in 2013 – 16.7%, and the country's average was 25.6%; however, this indicator has risen throughout the years.

## Healthcare

The main reason for the poor assessment of Targovishte District in the Healthcare category is the chronic deficiency of medical staff. While a general practitioner provisionally took care of 1,589 people in 2013, 2,150 people per doctor were treated in Targovishte District.

The shortage of specialists is clearly demonstrated by the number of internists and cardiologists. In 2013, there were 9,096 people per doctor specialised in Internal Medicine, the country's average being 5,775 people per doctor. 23,651 people have been treated by one cardiologist compared to 5,945 people per cardiologist for Bulgaria. People accepted for treatment at multi-profile hospitals for active medical treatment were 257.3 per thousand in 2013, which was 17% higher than the nationwide average. The survey shows that the population generally relies on local hospitals and specialists. From June 2013 to May 2014, 26.9% of treated people have had to travel out of the district to receive the services they had needed, which has been lower than the national average of 33.5%. 73% of them have stated that the reason for travelling in respect of treatment had been the lack of specialists. This reason has accounted for the biggest share in Targovishte District.

## Environment

The state of the ambient air is relatively good in the district. Carbon dioxide emissions in Targovishte District have been almost four times less than the country's average and they reached 88.7 tonnes per sq. km in 2012.

The share of the population with access to sewage, connected to waste water treatment plants, and also the share of the population in settlements with public sewerage systems were still relatively low in 2012 – 44.1% (compared to the country's average of 56.1%) and 55.7% (compared to the country's average of 74.3%) respectively, which could be reasoned with the relatively low urbanisation rate of the district. Nevertheless, both indicators have demonstrated growth throughout the years.

Two regional landfills for household waste have been constructed and are operational in Targovishte District. The regional strategy has reported a continuing problem with managing construction waste and the treatment of biodegradable waste. In 2012, collected household waste was 256.9 kg per capita in the district while this figure was 347 kg in the country.

## Social environment

The survey demonstrates that citizen's satisfaction of their life in the district is equal to the average assessment for the country – 3.4 points (from 1 to 5). Nevertheless, 39.5% of the surveyed people stated that they had tended to leave the district permanently compared to the country's average of 32.8%, which could be attributed to low incomes and the low employment rate. National statistics about the share of the population living in material deprivation demonstrate that Targovishte District was the fourth poorest district (following Veliko Tarnovo, Yambol and Lovech) featuring 60.1% of the population living in material deprivation in 2011. Simultaneously, the share of the population living in households with low work has been twice as big as the country's average. In 2011, 22% of people lived in such households compared to the national average of 11.2%.

There are two theatres, four museums and one cinema in the district. In 2013, citizens of Targovishte District visited the theatre and cinema twice as less as the country's average.

## Key indicators for the district of Targovishte

Indicators / year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	5 056	5 513	6 179	n.a.	n.a.
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	45.6	44.0	45.7	42.5	38.2
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	9.9	11.7	12.4	15.6	15.7
Relative share of people living below the district's poverty line (%)	19.2	17.3	21.20	n.a.	n.a.
Age dependency ratio, 65+ to 15-64 (%)	25.7	26.1	28.3	29.0	29.9
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-4.3	-4.9	-5.7	-6.0	-5.8
Net migration rate (‰)	-7.7	-9.5	-3.7	-3.1	-3.2
Relative share of the population aged 25-64 with tertiary education (%)	16.0	13.1	15.2	17.9	16.7
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams (%)	13.2	11.2	8.7	7.6	6.9
Average grade at state matriculation exams	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0
Share of roads in good condition (%)	n.a.	55.0	54.2	58.0	52.00
Relative share of households with Internet access (%)	21.0	20.2	24.3	38.3	29.4
Share of the population with access to public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	0	12.0	44.1	44.1	n.a.
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	87.2	83.8	87.9	86.9	85.8
Cases of hospitalization per 1,000 people	242.1	218.9	234.6	241.7	257.3
Average annual income per household member, BGN	2 373	2 354	2 695	2 924	3 025