

Dobrich District

- ▶ Population (2014) 183,744
- ▶ Area (sq. km) 4,719.7
- ▶ Number of settlements 215
- ▶ Share of urban population (%) 69.1



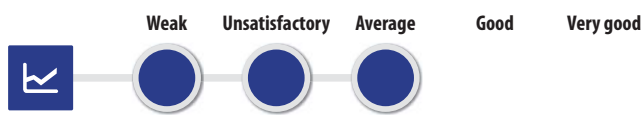
Overview

The indicators regarding the GDP, incomes and salaries in Dobrich District are lower than the country average. Nonetheless, a relatively smaller part of the population lives in poverty and material deprivation. Dobrich features a relatively high economic activity of the population, which is due to both the higher employment rate and the higher unemployment in the district compared to the country average. The district has failed in attracting sufficient foreign investments. Conducting business in the district has been hampered by the relatively high local taxes and fees, offset in part by the better development of the local government's

e-services and the better transparency of the local administration.

Demographic data give grounds to prognosticate that the district's population will start to age faster. The extraordinarily high share of repeaters and dropouts from primary and secondary schools poses an obvious problem. The healthcare indicators demonstrate that the district's citizens are either unable or unwilling to get healthcare services on the territory of the district. The registered crimes have increased in the past few years while the district's courts are among the least busy in Bulgaria.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Income and Living Conditions



Labor Market



Investment



Infrastructure



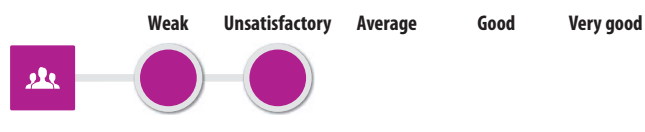
Taxes and Fees



Administration



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Demography



Education



Healthcare



Security and Justice



Environment



Culture



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ● ● ●

Income and Living Conditions ● ● ● ●

The district's economy had slumped since the beginning of the crisis in 2009, but quickly recovered exceeding its pre-crisis levels in GDP per capita as early as 2010. Nevertheless, incomes have remained below the country average. The annual income per household member reached 4,091 BGN in 2014, which was 15% less than the national figure. The annual average gross salary of the employed was 7,164 BGN in 2013 or lower than the country average by 23%.

Notwithstanding the lower incomes, poverty in Dobrich District is lower than in the rest of the districts. 31% of the district's population lived in material deprivation in 2012, the country average being 43%, and 9% lived in households with low work intensity compared to 12% for Bulgaria.

Labour Market ● ● ●

The population's economic activity has distinctly increased in the last four years and is above the country's average levels. The economic activity rate in the district reached 56.8% in 2014 compared to 54.1% for Bulgaria, which ranked Dobrich among the top five districts in economic activity.

The higher unemployment rate determined the higher economic activity of the population in Dobrich (14.3% in 2014 compared to a country average of 11.4%) with an employment rate roughly the same as the national level – 48.6%.

There were 60 youngsters aged 15–19 per 100 people aged 60–64 in 2014. This ratio implies a less favourable demographic replacement rate than the country average and future workforce shortages.

Investment ● ● ●

Although the number of enterprises and domestic investments, relative to the population in Dobrich District, has neared the country average figures, in 2013 the district failed to attract sufficient foreign investments. The accrued FDIs in non-financial companies were 300 m euros in the district as at the end of 2013. Relative to the population, this figure equalled 1,632.4 euros per capita, which was two times lower than the country average of 3,230.9 euros per capita.

As of 31 January 2015, the municipalities in the district received more than 85 m BGN or 463.0 BGN per capita as beneficiaries under the operational programmes, compared to 564.9 BGN per capita for the country. No big discrepancies between the eight municipalities are noted in Dobrich District in the utilisation of EU funds. Totals vary from 711.5 BGN per capita in Kavarna Muni-

city and 709.5 BGN per capita in Balchik Municipality to 126.3 BGN per capita in General Toshevo and 119.3 BGN per capita in Krushari Municipality.

Infrastructure ● ● ●

In view of the district's peripheral geographic location, the railway network density is almost three times lower than that in the rest of the country. The road network density has neared the national figure but has remained below it. Road quality aggravated for the third successive year in 2014, and the share of roads in good condition reached 39.9%, which means that for the first time in five years the share of roads in good condition has become negligibly lower than the country average of 40.5%.

The number of households with Internet access is lower than the rest of the districts (49.6% compared to 56.7%), but the share of people, who have used the Internet for the past 12 months, equals the country average.

Taxes and Fees ● ●

Municipal taxes and fees in Dobrich District considerably deviate from the country average. The annual license tax for retailers is almost 50% less than its national average in 2015. The taxes on properties of legal entities and the waste collection charges are lower than the country average, while the vehicle tax and the taxes on the sale of immovable property are higher by about 10–20%.

Administration ● ● ● ●

Dobrich was among the four districts with a larger share of the territory covered by the cadastral map in 2014 – 32.1% compared to the national average of 18.1%. Administrative one-stop shop services have traditionally been better developed compared to the other districts, and the level of local government e-services is similar to the average level of development in the country in 2015.

In 2015 the Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies in Dobrich District is higher than the country average. The district got 58.6 points in 2015 compared to the country's average of 54.4, out of Bulgaria's maximum of 88.4 points. The figure for local government bodies' transparency is the highest in Dobrich Municipality (73.0 points), which constitutes the third best result (following the municipalities of Strazhitsa and Sofia), out of 265 municipalities in Bulgaria. The municipalities of Krushari and Tervel have slightly lower results – 70.7 points, 68.3 points respectively, and Shabla Municipality has the poorest result of 24.0 points.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●

Demography ●●●

The rate of natural increase was more favourable in Dobrich District than that nationwide till 2008, but it has rapidly aggravated since then. The rate of natural decrease was -7.4‰ in the district in 2014 compared to Bulgaria's average of -5.7‰. Combined with the negative migration trends, this implies faster population ageing in the future, though the age dependency ratios are currently fluctuating about the country average. The relative share of urban population was 69.1% in 2014 compared to the country average of 73.1%. Population density is lowest in Dobrich District relative to the territory of settlements, and the district average was two times lower than that nationwide in 2014.

Education ●

Although data from state matriculation exams demonstrate that students in Dobrich District have performed relatively well, the district's rating is very poor due to the big share of repeaters and dropouts. Dobrich retained its first place with the biggest share of repeaters in 2014 as well – 2.4% compared to the national average of 1.4%. Moreover, the district ranked third (following Sliven and Targovishte) with the highest number of dropouts from primary and secondary schools – 4.0% compared to 2.4% for Bulgaria. The educational system has also failed in the enforcement of compulsory education – the net enrolment rate of the population (grades 5th through 8th) was the fourth lowest in Bulgaria (76.4%) in 2014.

There were 890 college students in 2014 in Dobrich District, or 5 students in institutions of higher education per 1,000 people compared to the country average of 38 per 1,000 people. The share of graduates in the population also lagged behind: 18.4% in 2014 compared to the national average of 27%.

Healthcare ●●●

The number of general practitioners in Dobrich District, relative to the population, has been traditionally higher than Bulgaria's average. However, the district lacked key health professionals in 2014, despite the improvement observed in recent years. Dobrich still has a relatively small number of beds in MphATs, ranking second to the district of Pernik in 2014 for the smallest number of beds per 1,000 people. Simultaneously, the district has ranked third (after Burgas and Pernik) in terms of the smallest number of inpatients. It can be assumed that these two indicators are interrelated, the reason being the frequent use of healthcare outside the district, probably in Varna, just like Pernik residents seek healthcare in the capital city.

Security and Justice ●●●

Generally, the number of registered crimes against the person has been lower in Dobrich District for the past 15 years than nationwide, relative to the population, but their number went sharply up in 2013 and 2014 to exceed the country average. The dynamics of registered crimes against the property has been similar; the traditionally low crime rate in recent years was followed by a surge in crimes to 89.9 per 10,000 people in 2014, which exceeded the country average.

Despite the growth of the crime rate in 2013, the workload of penal judges in the District Court continued to drop. There were 6 cases per month per judge in 2013 (compared to more than 7 cases three years earlier), while there were 8.3 cases per month per judge in Bulgaria on average. The performance of Dobrich District in this category was also positively influenced by both the relatively high share of criminal cases completed within 3 months (91.0% compared to the country average of 88.4%) and the relatively low share of pending criminal cases (7.2% compared to 8.5% for Bulgaria) in 2013.

Environment ●●●

Dobrich District was one of the four districts (following Varna, Pernik and Sofia City) featuring the highest share of the population having access to sewage connected to waste water treatment plants, in 2013 – 70.8% compared to the country's average of 56.4%. Dobrich was also one of the districts emitting the smallest volumes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere in 2013 – 5.2 tonnes of harmful emissions per sq. km compared to the country average of 293.9 t/sq. km. The district ranked fifth in lowest expenditure on environmental protection in 2013 – 114.4 BGN per capita or two and a half times lower than Bulgaria's average of 288.9 BGN per capita.

Culture ●●

The performance of Dobrich District concerning cultural life indicators has been controversial. On the one hand, there are several times fewer recorded visits to the cinema than the country average in 2014 – 125.2 per 1,000 people compared to the country average of 706 per 1,000 people. Figures for visits to theatres and libraries are also considerably lower than the country average. On the other hand, relative to the population, there have traditionally been many more visits to museums than the country average figures – 1,075 per 1,000 people in 2014 compared to 662 per 1,000, which probably was due to the intensive inflow of tourists into the district.

Key Indicators for the District of Dobrich

Economic Development	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	5,650	6,609	7,058	7,285	n.a.	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	2,974	3,013	2,994	3,856	4,166	4,091
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	5,772	6,130	6,394	6,738	7,164	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the district's poverty line (%)	21.4	19.6	23.4	20.2	n.a.	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population 15+ (%)	52.5	52.5	52.9	54.9	56.1	56.8
Annual average employment rate of the population 15+ (%)	45.7	43.9	43.7	46.4	47.3	48.6
Annual average unemployment rate (%)	12.9	16.4	17.3	15.4	15.8	14.3
Number of non-financial companies per 1,000 people	47	47	48	48	51	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	4,592	1,941	1,975	1,756	2,052	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	971	1,520	1,236	1,398	1,632	n.a.
Relative share of households with Internet access (%)	20.0	24.1	36.2	49.7	54.1	49.6
Share of roads in good condition (%)	n.a.	47.9	45.2	46.0	45.8	39.3
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	32.1	32.1	32.1	32.1	32.1	32.1

Social Development	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-4.6	-5.9	-5.7	-6.8	-6.7	-7.4
Net migration rate (‰)	-4.4	-5.6	-3.7	-2.5	-2.8	-2.8
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with tertiary education (%)	16.7	17.9	18.4	18.3	18.4	18.4
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.3
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams	6.4	3.9	2.6	3.2	4.1	2.9
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	87.6	83.9	86.6	85.4	84.0	84.6
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals	138.0	127.4	131.5	136.5	134.1	134.5
Crimes against the property per 10,000 people	88.0	96.0	85.7	81.7	88.2	89.9
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	5.6	6.3	7.4	7.3	7.2	n.a.
Expenditure on environmental protection per capita (BGN)	63.5	57.5	64.4	100.4	114.4	n.a.
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WTPP (%)	67.4	67.7	69.4	70.7	70.8	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	41.3	58.0	64.7	24.4	28.3	125.2
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	88.0	76.6	214.2	205.0	244.8	261.0