

# Targovishte District

▶ Population (2014)	117,069
▶ Area (sq. km)	2,558.5
▶ Number of settlements	199
▶ Share of urban population (%)	54.1

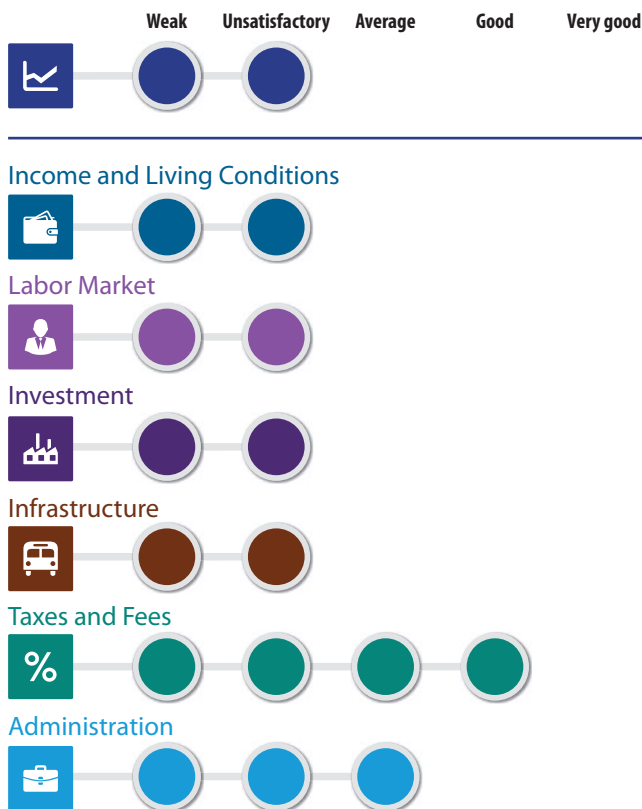


## Overview

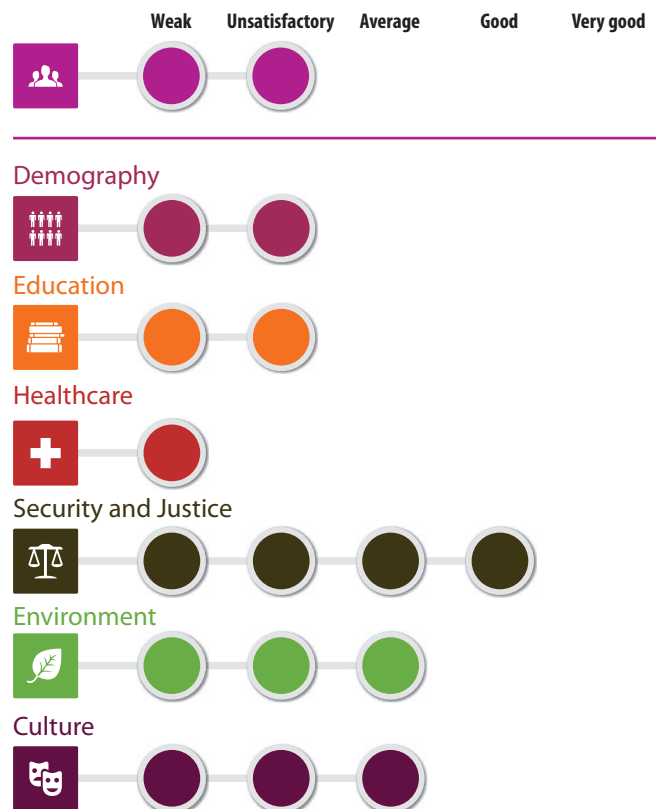
The gross domestic product as well as incomes in Targovishte District have continued to considerably lag behind the national averages. The poor economic development of the district predetermines the population's relatively low standard of living. The district has the second lowest economic activity of the population among all twenty-eight districts. Although unemployment in the district equals the national average, Targovishte is among the districts with the lowest employment rate. Quite a small number of enterprises and foreign investment almost half the country aver-

age are among the reasons for the low economic activity. The relatively low taxes and the relatively high transparency of local government bodies could be considered a stimulus for more investments. Almost half the district's population live in villages. There is a relatively small share of university graduates in the working population and the entire district suffers from a lack of general practitioners and health professionals. Courts function relatively well in the district and the workload of penal judges is extremely low.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●●

### Income and Living Conditions ●●

Targovishte District has slowly started to recover following the initial deterioration of the economic situation due to the onset of the economic crisis. Regardless of this, the district's GDP and incomes have continued to lag considerably behind the national average levels. The average annual income per household member was the second lowest in Bulgaria in 2014 (after Silistra District).

Low incomes and insufficient employment have also predetermined the relatively worse indicators regarding poverty and living conditions in the district. 47.7% of the district's population lived in material deprivation in 2012, compared to the country average of 43%. Both the share of people living in households with low work intensity (17.9% compared to the country average of 11.6%) and the share of people living below the district's poverty line (25% compared to the nationwide average of 21%) are higher than the country averages.

### Labour Market ●●

Although the unemployment rate in Targovishte District equalled the national average of 11.4% in 2014, the district faces serious problems with economic activity and employment. The economic activity rate of 45.2% in 2014 (compared to the country average of 54.1%) was the lowest nationally after that of Lovech District (41.1%). The employment rate was 40.1% (compared to 48% for Bulgaria), thus ranking Targovishte among the five districts with the lowest employment, after Lovech, Silistra, Vidin and Vratsa.

Data on demographic replacement demonstrate a better situation in Targovishte compared to most districts and the country. The ratio of people aged 15–19 to those aged 60–64 was 67.8% (61.9% regarding Bulgaria) in 2014, which means that 68 young people would join the labour market per 100 people who would leave it.

### Investment ●●

After the districts of Kardzhali and Montana, Targovishte was the district with the lowest number of companies in proportion to the population in 2013. Foreign investments are almost half the national average, but the lower drop of expenditure on FTAs during the crisis and the acceleration of investment activities since 2012 allowed Targovishte even to exceed the country average in 2013.

EU funds utilised by the district's municipalities are below the country average. 486 BGN per capita were paid in Targovishte District as at the end of January 2015 (compared to the country average of 565 BGN per capita); most funds have been drawn down by Popovo Municipality (1,243 BGN per capita).

### Infrastructure ●●

Both the road network density and its quality are higher than the country average. 47% of roads were in good condition in 2014, a drop of 10 pp for two years, but still above the country average of 40.5%.

Targovishte District ranked third in Bulgaria in 2014 for lowest share of households with Internet access: 41.8% compared to the country average of 57%. The share of people to use the Internet was more than 10 pp lower: 49% for the district compared to 59% for the country.

### Taxes and Fees ●●●●

The municipalities in Targovishte District have continued to maintain relatively low rates of local taxes and fees in 2015 as well. The annual license tax for retailers is considerably lower than the country average – there is no municipality in Targovishte charging more than 10 BGN per sq. m, while the country average is almost 13 BGN per sq. m. The immovable property tax for legal entities, on average for the district's municipalities, is the third lowest in Bulgaria.

### Administration ●●●

Targovishte is among the four districts featuring the lowest share of territory included in cadastral maps. 6% of the district's territory was included in cadastral maps in 2014, which was three times less than the national average (18.1%). The level of development of local government e-services and one-stop shop services is also below the country average and has not progressed much in 2015.

The district's results for transparency of local government bodies are relatively good. The municipalities of Popovo and Targovishte received the highest grades for transparency by the AIP Foundation in 2015 – 66.4 points, 62.9 points respectively, compared to the country average of 54.5 points.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Demography

Similarly to the situation in the entire country, Targovishte District had a negative natural increase of  $-6.7\%$  in 2014, compared to  $-5.7\%$  for Bulgaria. The net migration rate is also negative ( $-4.4\%$ ) but higher as an absolute value than those in the other districts from the North-eastern region, except Razgrad District. The age dependency ratio (65+ to 0–14) is lower than the country average, meaning that ageing is less pronounced in Targovishte District. Nonetheless, the difference has gradually decreased in recent years.

Almost half of the district's population live in villages, which ranks the district fourth in terms of the lowest share of urban population following the districts of Kardzhali, Razgrad and Silistra.

### Education

There is no institution of higher education in the district, and the share of university graduates was 10 pp below the country's average of 27% in 2014.

In characteristics on the state of secondary education Targovishte is distinguished as one of the districts with a relatively high net enrolment rate (grades 5th through 8th) of 81.6% in 2014 compared to the country average of 78.6%. Grades from state matriculation exams have traditionally been lower than the country average, but the share of failed students fell in 2015. Targovishte was the second district in 2013 (after Sliven) with the highest share of dropouts from primary and secondary education: 4.3% compared to the country average of 2.4%.

### Healthcare

Healthcare indicators in the district disclose disturbing trends. Targovishte is one of the districts with the highest scarcity of general practitioners. There is also a need for specialized health professionals. Targovishte is the second district (after Razgrad) with the highest insufficient number of specialists in Cardiology, and one such specialist treated four people more than the country average on average in 2014.

In the number of beds in multi-profile hospitals in proportion to the population the district is near the country averages, but along with Montana, Targovishte is the district with the highest morbidity rates judging by the share of cases of hospitalisation in 2014.

### Security and Justice

Penal judges in Targovishte District have less work compared to those in any other district. While the country average was 8.3 cases per month per judge in 2013, the judges at Targovishte District Court tried 3.5 cases per month per judge. The low workload is a prerequisite for the quicker ruling of cases. 94% of criminal cases heard by the District Court in 2013 were closed in the first 3 months compared to the country average of 88.4%. Despite the low workload and the relatively high share of cases closed in the first 3 months, the share of pending criminal cases is higher in the district than the country average – 9.6% compared to 8.5% for Bulgaria.

Registered crimes against property were half the country average in 2014 at 49.1 per 10,000 people for the district, compared to the country average of 89 per 10,000 people.

### Environment

Targovishte District is still one of the districts with the lowest emissions of carbon dioxide: they were three times lower in 2013 compared to the country average. The district's expenditure on environmental protection was three times lower than the country average as well. A total of 95.2 BGN per capita were spent on environmental protection in 2013 (a bit more than 11 m BGN), compared to the country average of 289 BGN per capita.

The share of the population with access to public sewerage systems connected to waste water treatment plants has been relatively low (44.1% compared to the country average of 56.4%), just like the share of the population in settlements with public sewerage systems (56.1% compared to the country average of 74.7% in 2013).

### Culture

Targovishte District has demonstrated disparity in the indicators measuring its cultural life. On the one hand, the district has performed well in number of visits to theatres and libraries; the number of visits per 1,000 people of the population is higher than the country average with regard to both indicators. At the same time, the district has reported a much lower number of visits to cinemas and museums. Visits to cinemas were 8.5 per 1,000 people in 2014 (compared to the country average of 706 per 1,000 people), and visits to museums were 178 per 1,000 people (compared to the country average of 662 per 1,000 people).

## Key Indicators for the District of Targovishte

Economic Development	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	5,311	5,546	6,548	6,929	n.a.	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	2,373	2,354	2,695	2,924	3,025	3,546
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	5,389	5,620	5,913	6,556	7,195	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the district's poverty line (%)	19.2	17.3	21.2	25.0	n.a.	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population 15+ (%)	50.6	49.9	52.1	50.3	45.3	45.2
Annual average employment rate of the population 15+ (%)	45.6	44.0	45.7	42.5	38.2	40.1
Annual average unemployment rate (%)	9.9	11.7	12.4	15.6	15.7	11.4
Number of non-financial companies per 1,000 people	32	31	31	31	32	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	1,136	911	1,299	2,165	2,700	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	1,173	1,405	1,607	1,562	1,784	n.a.
Relative share of households with Internet access (%)	21.0	20.2	24.3	38.3	29.4	41.8
Share of roads in good condition (%)	n.a.	55.0	54.2	58.0	52.0	47.0
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0

Social Development	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-4.3	-4.9	-5.7	-6.0	-5.8	-6.7
Net migration rate (‰)	-7.7	-9.5	-3.7	-3.1	-3.2	-4.4
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with tertiary education (%)	16.0	13.1	15.2	17.9	16.7	17.3
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.0	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1	4.0
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams	13.2	11.2	8.7	7.6	4.5	6.9
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	87.2	83.8	87.9	86.9	85.8	86.9
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals	242.1	218.9	234.6	241.7	257.3	250.8
Crimes against the property per 10,000 people	76.9	81.9	64.2	56.6	59.4	49.1
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	6.7	8.1	6.1	8.7	9.6	n.a.
Expenditure on environmental protection per capita (BGN)	93.6	95.8	106.5	122.2	95.2	n.a.
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WTPP (%)	0.0	12.0	44.1	44.1	44.1	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	28.0	25.9	26.0	24.6	36.4	8.5
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	191.5	245.6	364.5	373.1	479.8	506.3