

Razgrad district

- ▶ Population (2023)
- ▶ Territory (sq. km)
- ▶ Number of settlements
- ▶ Share of urban population (%)

100,696
2,488
103
47.4



GDP in Razgrad district continues to grow but at a lower than average rate, and its per capita value remains relatively low. Employment and unemployment are rising simultaneously. Investment and business activity in the district is showing some improvement. The share of highways and first-class roads, as well as that of road surfaces in good condition, is extremely low. The average level of the local taxes levied by Razgrad's municipalities is considerably lower than the national average. The local authorities' self-assessments of the development of e-government have gone up.

The district manages to attract population and the net migration rate is positive. Students' results are extremely low. Razgrad is one of the districts with the most acute shortage of doctors – both GPs and specialist physicians. The number of crimes in the district has increased slightly but remains relatively low. However, their detection rate is also increasing and remains considerably above the national average. Razgrad is among the districts with the lowest volume of household waste submitted for treatment and recycling. Cultural life and tourism are characterized by a low intensity.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Income and living conditions



Labor market



Investment and business



Infrastructure



Local taxes



Administration



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



Demography



Education



Healthcare



Security and justice



Environment



Culture and tourism



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and living conditions

GDP per capita in Razgrad district has continued to grow but at a lower than average rate, and its value per capita remains relatively low – 15,900 BGN, against 26,000 BGN in the country in 2022. Both salaries and pensions in the district are rising at a slower rate. The average gross annual salary of people employed under labor contract has reached 17,000 BGN, versus 21,200 BGN nationally. The average monthly pension for 2023 is 647 BGN, versus 784 BGN countrywide, and remains among the three lowest in the country.

In 2023, the Gini coefficient for income inequality in the district went slightly up but it still remains among the relatively low ones in the country. The poverty level, on the other hand, has also been rising and is again among the country's highest. The share of the population living below the national poverty line is 31.3%, compared to 20.6% nationally.

Labor market

The share of the working-age population is decreasing and is moving away from the national average. In 2023 it reached 57.9%, compared to 58.5% nationally. Employment and unemployment are rising simultaneously, and both indicators are significantly less favorable than the average ones countrywide. The employment rate for 2023 is 64.5%, compared to 76.2% nationally, and the unemployment rate is 9.7%, versus 5.3% nationally.

The educational structure of the workforce also remains among the challenges facing the local labor market. The share of the population aged 25–64 with a university degree has decreased to 24%, against 31% in the country, while that of the people with primary or lower education has shrunk to 29%, though continuing to be almost twice higher than in the country, where the average is 15%.

Investment and business

Investment activity in Razgrad district again recorded some improvement in 2022. The relative number of enterprises is 50 per 1,000 population, compared to the national average of 70 per 1,000 population. TFA acquisition expenditures went slightly up to 2,100 BGN/person, compared to the average of 4,300 BGN/person in the country. FDI reached 2,300 EUR/person, and production value amounted to 120,900 BGN per employed person. The share of export earnings in net sales revenues is growing and has reached the significant 44%, compared to 29% in the country. Research and development expenditures remain limited – 19 BGN/person, versus 195 BGN in the country.

Utilization of European funds has been lagging behind. By 30 June 2024, payments made in the district to beneficiaries

under EU operational programs amounted to 2,380 BGN/person, compared to 3,175 BGN/person in the country. Within the district, the highest figures for utilization of EU funding were recorded by the municipalities in Kubrat and Isperih.

Infrastructure

The density of the district's railroad network is close to, though slightly above the country's average. The road network density is higher, but the share of highways and first-class roads remains extremely low – 11%, compared to 19% countrywide, and so does the share of road surfaces in good condition – 25%, versus 40% nationally in 2023.

The relative share of households with internet access has gone slightly down to 84% and remains lower than the average of 89% nationwide.

Razgrad is the district with the lowest share of population living in settlements with a public sewerage network – 42% in 2022, compared to the national figure of 75%. All public sewerage networks are connected to wastewater treatment plants, though the coverage remains extremely low – only a share of 42% of the population, compared to 67% nationwide.

Local taxes

In 2024, the average level of local taxes in Razgrad district's municipalities again remained considerably lower than the national average. Among the four monitored local taxes, only the tax rate on non-residential immovable property of legal entities was higher in Razgrad district than the average one in the country, albeit by a small margin.

Significantly lower than the national average were the local taxes on non-gratuitous acquisition of property and retail trade.

Within the district, the lowest taxes are levied by Tsar Kaloyan municipality, and the highest – by that of Loznitsa.

Administration

The local authorities' self-assessments of the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop shop services went up in 2024 and exceeded the national average.

The AIP Active transparency rating of the local administration is 69.0% and is again below the national average, albeit slightly.

The share of own revenues in the total revenues of the district's municipalities is decreasing and remains low – 20% in 2023, compared to 27% the country in 2023. The coverage of municipal expenses with local revenues is 64%, versus 74% nationally.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ■

Demography ■■■■

The natural population increase rate in Razgrad district is relatively low and in 2023 it was -9.7% , versus the national average of -6.8% . At the same time, the district has managed to attract new residents and the net migration rate is positive (5.7%), but that cannot compensate for the population decrease.

Population aging in the district is reflected in the age structure as well. The share of children under 4 years is 4.0% , against 4.5% nationally, and that of the population aged 65 and over – 25.0% , versus the national average of 23.8% .

Population density in Razgrad's urbanized settlements is relatively low – 841 persons/sq. km, compared to 1,221 persons/sq. km in the country.

Education ■■■■

The share of children in the district attending kindergarten and the enrolment rate in 5th–7th grade are slightly above the respective national averages. The share of school year repeaters is growing but remains below the national average. The alignment between vocational education and the profile of the economy is close to, but below the national average.

Students' results for 2024 were extremely low in Razgrad district. The average score in the NEA in mathematics after 7th grade was 33.9 p., versus 42.9 p. nationally, and was the fourth lowest in the country. The average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature was the second lowest in the country – “Good” 3.88, compared to “Good” 4.30 in the country, while the share of “fail” grades (below 3.00) was one of the highest – 15.3% , against the national average of 8.7% .

The single provider of higher education in Razgrad district is a branch of Ruse University. This accounts for the small number of university students in the district – the 2023 data show just 2 students per 1,000 population, compared to 30 students per 1,000 population nationally.

Healthcare ■■

The share of people with health insurance in Razgrad district remains extremely high, covering practically the whole population. At the same time, Razgrad is among the districts with the most acute shortage of doctors – both GPs and specialist physicians. In 2023, one local GP cared for 2,402 persons on average, compared to 1,701 persons per doctor in the country.

The relative number of hospital beds in the local general hospitals is also relatively limited and within a year it dropped to 4.4 beds per 1,000 population, compared to 6.1 per 1,000 population in the country. This has an impact on hospital bed occupancy which, although low, has increased to 49% , against 56% nationally. Razgrad is the district with the lowest relative number of pharmacies – one pharmacy per 3,363 population, versus one per 1,982 population in the country.

The average life expectancy in the district is relatively low and the infant mortality rate is high.

Security and justice ■■■■

The workloads of criminal judges in Razgrad district are relatively low, which impacts the speed of delivery of justice. In 2023, one District Court judge heard an average of 10.4 cases a month, compared to 14.4 cases per judge nationally, while a judge in the Administrative Court heard 8.3 cases monthly, which is the lowest workload in the country, compared to the national average of 14.8 cases. The proportion of criminal cases closed within 3 months is 93% , compared to the average of 91% nationwide, of administrative cases it is 84% , against 72% in the country, and of civil cases – 82% , against 65% in the country.

The number of crimes registered in Razgrad district has gone slightly up but remains relatively low. Registered crimes against the person and property in the district amount to 9.3 per 1,000 population, versus the average of 11.3 per 1,000 population nationwide. However, the detection rate has also increased and remains considerably above the national average – 66% , in the district, compared to 53% nationally. The number of police officers relative to the population remains comparatively low.

Environment ■■

The amounts of waste generated by households in Razgrad district continued to grow in 2022 to a level exceeding the national average relative to the population. Its average volume reached 491 kg/person annually, compared to 488 kg/person in the country on average. At the same time, Razgrad ranks among the districts with the lowest amounts handed over for treatment and recycling, outranking only Kardzhali district – a mere 11% , versus the national average of 76% .

The share of forest areas is relatively low – 22% , against 33% in the country, but the share of disturbed area is also small – 0.2% , against 0.4% countrywide in 2023.

The installed RES capacities relative to population in 2024 are relatively limited. Razgrad is among the districts with a high cooling degree days. However, households' drinking water consumption is low.

Culture and tourism ■■

Cultural life in the district was again not particularly active in 2023. Visits to cinemas, theaters and museums relative to the population increased, but remained relatively small in number. For its part, the number of visits to libraries went down and in this indicator the district takes one of the bottom places.

Razgrad is among the districts with the lowest number of beds in accommodation establishments – 7 per 1,000 population, compared to 56 per 1,000 population in the country. Overnight stays are also limited – 474 per 1,000 population, versus 4,167 per 1,000 population nationally in 2023. The number of guest nights booked via online sharing economy is also low.

Key indicators for the district of Razgrad

Economic Development Indicators	2021	2022	2023	National average
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (BGN, current prices)	12,942	15,858	n.a.	25,956
Average gross annual salary of people employed under labour contract (BGN)	15,517	16,955	n.a.	21,242
Share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	16.7	27.7	31.3	20.6
Share of the working-age population (%)	59.9	58.2	57.9	58.5
Average annual employment rate of the population aged 15–64 (%)	60.0	64.2	64.5	76.2
Average annual unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	8.8	9.4	9.7	5.3
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education (%)	34.1	31.3	28.7	14.8
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with higher education (%)	21.1	24.9	23.5	30.5
Production value (BGN/employed person)	83,543	120,925	n.a.	122,377
Expenditures on the acquisition of tangible fixed assets (BGN/person)	2,046	2,116	n.a.	4,257
Foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises (cumulative) (EUR/person)	1,917	2,336	n.a.	4,544
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage networks (%)	41.5	42.1	n.a.	75.0
Share of road surfaces in good condition (%)	16.9	26.2	25.2	40.4
Coverage of municipal expenditures with local revenues (%)	78.1	75.3	63.7	74.1
Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies (%)*	68.1	68.2	69.0	69.3

Social Development Indicators	2021	2022	2023	National average
Natural population increase rate (‰)	n.a.	-13.5	-9.7	-6.8
Net migration rate (‰)	n.a.	4.4	5.7	6.4
Average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	3.53	3.50	3.88	4.30
Average grade in the National external assessment in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	29.1	25.9	33.9	42.9
Net enrolment rate of the population (5th to 7th grade) (%)	85.5	92.7	91.8	89.9
Average life expectancy (years)***	71.3	70.7	71.6	73.5
Share of people with health insurance (%)	96.3	100.0	100.0	95.0
Population per one GP (persons)	2,293	2,362	2,402	1,701
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 population	7.3	9.2	9.3	11.3
Share of criminal cases closed within 3 months	91	90	93	91
Households' consumption of municipally supplied drinking water (liter/person/day)	84	88	n.a.	103
Generated household waste of serviced population (kg/person/year)	481	491	n.a.	488
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	10	11	n.a.	76
Visits to cinemas (number/1,000 population)	85	215	220	684
Overnight stays in accommodation establishments (number/1,000 population)	468	497	474	4,167

* The 2023 data are included in the 2024 study. The same is valid for the previous years.

** The data refer to the 2023-24 academic year, while the State matriculation exams took place in 2024. The same is valid for the previous years.

*** Data are for three-year periods and are updated annually.