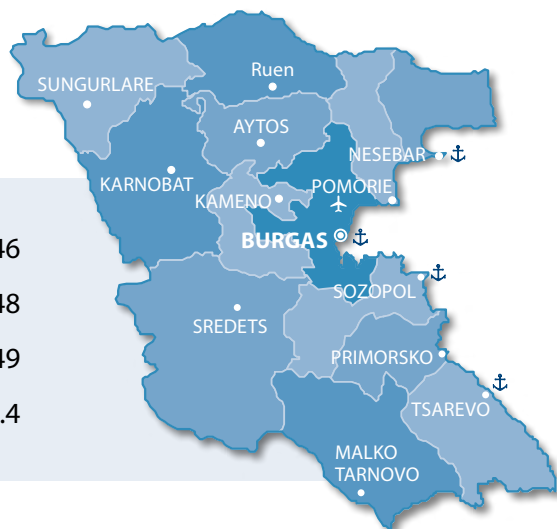


Burgas District

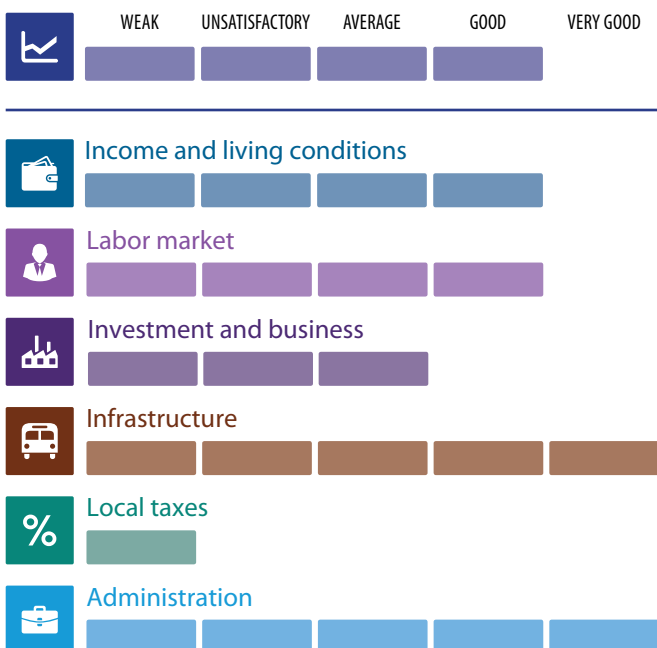


▶ Population (2023)	384,446
▶ Territory (sq. km)	7,748
▶ Number of settlements	249
▶ Share of urban population (%)	76.4

GDP per capita in Burgas district continues to increase, although its growth is relatively limited. Employment and unemployment rates are growing simultaneously. Investment and business activity in the district remains relatively high. The share of highways and first-class roads is high, but the quality of road surfaces remains low. Burgas is among the districts with the highest level of local taxation. The local administrations' self-assessments of e-government development and the provision of one-stop shop services are improving.

The demographic indicators place Burgas district among the top four in the country. In 2024, the results of the students in the district in the NEA in mathematics at the end of 7th grade were relatively high. However, the average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature continues to be relatively low. Healthcare in the district is still suffering from a shortage of GPs. The crime rate is rising and remains above the national average. The share of forest area is high. Burgas is the district with the highest rating in the culture and tourism sector.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Income and living conditions

In 2022, GDP per capita in Burgas district continued to increase, although its growth remained relatively limited. With a value of 19,500 BGN, it ranks the district eighth in the country. Salaries have also been growing, but their increase is lower than the national average. In 2022, the average annual gross salary of people employed under labor contract in the district reached 16,300 BGN. For its part, in 2023 the average monthly pension rose to 872 BGN, remaining significantly higher than the national average of 784 BGN. Income inequality in the district is lower than the national average and the share of the population living below the national poverty line is decreasing, although it remains above the national average – 21.0% in Burgas district, compared to 20.6% in the country.

Labor market

The share of the working-age population in Burgas district has registered a slight decrease to 58.7%, but it remains above the national average of 58.5%. Employment and unemployment are rising simultaneously. In 2023, the employment rate reached the national average of 76.2%, while the unemployment rate remained relatively low despite a slight increase to 4.2%, compared to 5.3% nationally.

The educational status of the workforce in the district is gradually, though slowly improving. The share of people aged 25–64 with university education is 23%, against 31% on a national level, while the share of people with primary or lower education is 18%, compared to the national average of 15%.

Investment and business

In 2022, investment and business activity in Burgas district again remained relatively high. The number of non-financial enterprises relative to the population was 84 per 1,000 population, second only to the capital district. Burgas continues to be among the districts with the highest relative volume of FDI, again ranking third (after the capital and Sofia district) with 5,500 EUR/person. Both TFA acquisition expenditure per capita and production value have increased. The share of export earnings in net sales revenues has fallen slightly to 26% and for the first time is below the national average of 29%.

Payments made to beneficiaries of EU projects have grown as well and by 30 June 2024 they came close to the national average levels. Within the district, the largest sums were utilized by the municipalities of Primorsko, Sozopol and Malko Tarnovo.

Infrastructure

The density of the road and rail network in the district of Burgas again remained relatively low in 2023. The share of highways and first-class roads is high at 26%, versus 19% in the country, but road surface quality remains low – 30% in good condition, against the national average of 40%.

The share of households with internet access continues to be high – 91%, versus the national average of 89%. Access to public sewerage networks in the district is also relatively good – 79%, versus 75% nationally, and almost the entire territory is connected to wastewater treatment plants – 72%, compared to 67% in the country.

Local taxes

Burgas remains among the districts with the highest level of local taxation for 2024. The gap is particularly large for the taxation on motor vehicles and retail trade. Indeed, Burgas is once again the district with the highest taxation on motor vehicles – 1.81 BGN/kW on average, compared to the national average of 1.56 BGN/kW.

Sozopol is the municipality with the highest local taxes both within the district and in the country. Relatively high are also the rates in the tourist municipalities of Pomorie, Primorsko and Burgas. Within the district, the lowest taxes are levied by Malko Tarnovo municipality.

Administration

The share of own revenues in the total revenues of the municipalities in the district is the third highest in the country, after that of the capital and Sofia district – 35%, compared to the national average of 27% in 2023. The district is also among the leaders in covering municipal expenditures with local revenues, probably due to the good tourism and property market development.

The local authorities' self-assessments of the development of e-government and the provision of one-stop shop administrative services went up in 2024 and are also among the highest in the country.

The AIP Active transparency rating of the local administration has decreased but remains higher, albeit by a small margin, than the national average.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Demography

The demographic indicators place Burgas district among the top four in the country, after Sofia (capital city), Sliven and Varna. The rate of natural population increase is still negative, though at -5.3‰ in 2023 it is still among the highest in the country, compared to the national average of -6.8‰ . Burgas district also attracts many new residents and its net migration rate of 20.6‰ is the second highest in the country, after that of Kurdzhali district. The share of children under 4 years is similar to that in the country – 4.4%, versus 4.5% nationwide, but that of people aged 65 and over remains relatively lower at 22.5%, versus 23.8% nationwide.

The population density in the urbanized settlements in Burgas district is also close to the national average – 1,246 persons/sq. km, compared to 1,221 persons/sq. km in the country.

Education

The share of children enrolled in local kindergartens has registered a slight decrease, though in 2023 it remained close to and slightly above the national average

For its part, the enrolment rate in 5th–7th grade again remained below the national average in 2023. The index for the alignment between vocational education and the profile of the economy is rising and is now above the national average.

In 2024, the results in the NEA in mathematics at the end of 7th grade were relatively high – 45.3 p. on average, compared to the national average of 42.9 p. However, the average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature lags behind the national average – the average grade in 2024 was “Good” 4.14, compared to “Good” 4.30 in the country, and the share of “fail” grades (below 3.00) was 11.7%, against 8.7% on average in the country.

The number of university students in the district relative to the population decreased in 2023 to 14.5 per 1,000 population.

Healthcare

In 2023, the share of people with health insurance in Burgas district again remained relatively low – 90%, compared to the national average of 95%. Healthcare in the district also continues to suffer from a shortage of GPs – there are 2,085 persons per one GP, compared to 1,701 persons per one GP in the country. The number of beds in the local general hospitals has risen considerably, reaching 5.8 per 1,000 population, against 6.1 hospital beds per 1,000 population countrywide. Hospital bed occupancy has also increased to 59%, compared to 56% nationally for 2023. Access to pharmacies is the highest in the whole country.

The infant mortality rate has decreased and in 2023 it was similar to that in the country. For its part, life expectancy in the district has gone up to 74.0 years, compared to 73.5 nationwide.

Security and justice

The speed of delivery of justice in Burgas district and the local justice system’s workloads in 2023 were close to the respective national averages. The share of criminal cases closed within 3 months was 88%, compared to the national average of 91%, the share of civil cases – 72%, versus 65% in the country, and that of administrative cases – 73%, against 72% nationally. There were on average 11.9 cases a month per one District Court judge, compared to 14.4 nationally, and 13.8 cases per one judge in the Administrative Court, versus 14.8 cases nationally.

The crime rate in the district has been rising and remains above the national average. In 2023, the registered crimes against the person and property in Burgas district amounted to 13.6 per 1,000 population, versus 11.3 per 1,000 population nationally. At the same time, the detection rate has gone up to 52%, versus the national average of 53%. The number of police officers is also similar to the national average – 4.5 per 1,000 population in the district, against 4.2 per 1,000 population nationally.

Environment

In 2022, Burgas once again ranked among the districts with high amounts of household-generated waste – an annual of 543 kg/person, against 488 kg/person on a national scale. At the same time, however, the share of that waste handed over for treatment and recycling was also large – 93%, against 76% as the national average.

The relative volume of installed RES capacities in Burgas district remains relatively low, though it has been rising and by 30 June 2024 it was 0.6 kW/person, against the national average of 1.0 kW/person. The share of forest areas is high – 41%, compared to 33% nationally, and that of disturbed area low – 0.2%, versus 0.4% nationally in 2023.

Culture and tourism

Culture and tourism are strongly present in Burgas and the district leads the ranking in this category. In 2023, the relative number of visits to cinemas and libraries was above the national average relative to the population, while that of visits to theatres and museums – below, though close to the national average. Cinema visits reached 769 per 1,000 population, against 684 per 1,000 population nationwide, and visits to museums numbered 767 per 1,000 population, against 770 per 1,000 population in the country. Numbers for library visits stood at 844 per 1,000 population, compared to 679 per 1,000 population nationwide, while the number of theatre visits was 303 per 1,000 population, against 349 per 1,000 population nationwide.

Burgas is the district with the highest relative number of beds in accommodation establishments (382 per 1,000 population, versus 56 per 1,000 population in the country), as well as the number of overnight stays (25,257 per 1,000 population, versus 4,167 per 1,000 population in the country in 2022. Guest nights booked via online sharing economy platforms number 2,674 per 1,000 population, compared to 500 per 1,000 population nationally.

Key indicators for the district of Burgas

Economic Development Indicators	2021	2022	2023	National average
Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (BGN, current prices)	15,815	19,534	n.a.	25,956
Average gross annual salary of people employed under labour contract (BGN)	14,852	16,307	n.a.	21,242
Share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	24.6	22.1	21.0	20.6
Share of the working-age population (%)	60.2	58.9	58.7	58.5
Average annual employment rate of the population aged 15–64 (%)	70.0	74.3	76.2	76.2
Average annual unemployment rate of the population aged 15+ (%)	4.7	4.0	4.2	5.3
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with primary or lower education (%)	19.5	19.1	18.4	14.8
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with higher education (%)	24.4	22.3	23.4	30.5
Production value (BGN/employed person)	83,603	103,064	n.a.	122,377
Expenditures on the acquisition of tangible fixed assets (BGN/person)	2,893	3,181	n.a.	4,257
Foreign direct investment in non-financial enterprises (cumulative) (EUR/person)	5,643	5,470	n.a.	4,544
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage networks (%)	78.5	78.5	n.a.	75.0
Share of road surfaces in good condition (%)	31.0	29.4	30.0	40.4
Coverage of municipal expenditures with local revenues (%)	101.3	101.8	83.0	74.1
Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies (%)*	72.4	72.7	69.4	69.3

Social Development Indicators	2021	2022	2023	National average
Natural population increase rate (‰)	n.a.	–8.2	–5.3	–6.8
Net migration rate (‰)	n.a.	7.1	20.6	6.4
Average grade in the State matriculation exam in Bulgarian language and literature**	3.85	3.68	4.14	4.30
Average grade in the National external assessment in mathematics after 7th grade (points)**	36.9	37.2	45.3	42.9
Net enrolment rate of the population (5th to 7th grade) (%)	84.8	90.2	89.0	89.9
Average life expectancy (years)***	73.8	73.1	74.0	73.5
Share of people with health insurance (%)	83.9	90.3	90.2	95.0
Population per one GP (persons)	2,129	2,037	2,085	1,701
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 population	11.3	12.5	13.6	11.3
Share of criminal cases closed within 3 months	88	89	88	91
Households' consumption of municipally supplied drinking water (liter/person/day)	109	111	n.a.	103
Generated household waste of serviced population (kg/person/year)	481	543	n.a.	488
Share of household waste handed over for treatment and recycling (%)	94	93	n.a.	76
Visits to cinemas (number/1,000 population)	402	674	769	684
Overnight stays in accommodation establishments (number/1,000 population)	15,447	23,733	25,257	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.