

Vidin District

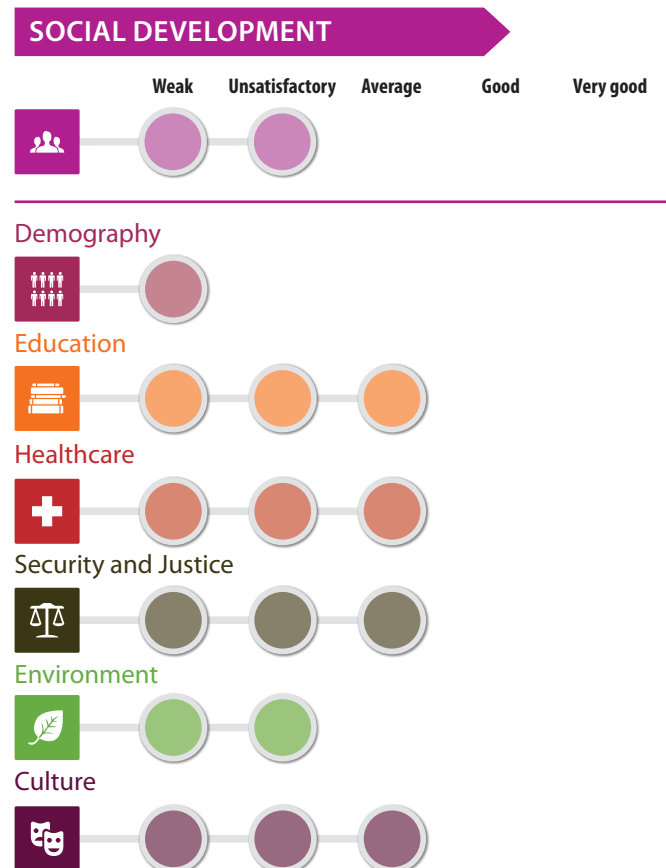
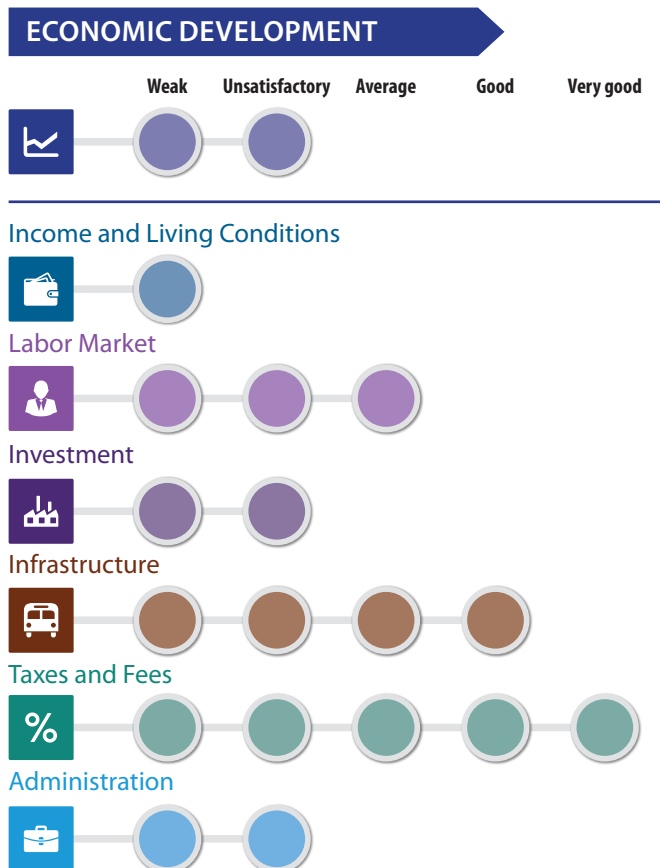


▶ Population (2016)	90,051
▶ Area (sq. km)	3,032.9
▶ Number of settlements	143
▶ Share of urban population (%)	64.0

Overview

Vidin is one of the districts with the lowest GDP per capita and the district with lowest salaries. These indicators predetermine the relatively high share of people living in material deprivation and those living in poverty – the poor make up almost half of its population. On the labor market the tendency for increasing employment in recent years was reversed in 2016, whereas unemployment rates remained almost twice the national average. Investment activity in the district also stayed relatively low, albeit with some improvement. The average rates of the monitored local taxes and fees in the district’s municipalities

place Vidin among the districts with the lowest tax burden. Vidin has confirmed its position as the district with the smallest number of inhabitants; it ranks second in the country in terms of rapidly ageing population. Education in the district has shown some positive tendencies. The shortage of GPs and specialist doctors and the limited availability of hospital beds entail a small number of hospitalizations. Clearance rates in the district are going up while the relatively low workloads of criminal judges facilitate a speedier administration of justice. Theaters and museums still attract a considerable number of visitors.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●●

Income and Living Conditions ●

Vidin is one of the districts with the worst population welfare. Despite the low base, GDP per capita grew twice as slowly as the national average in 2015 to reach 6,258 BGN/person while the national average was 12,339 BGN/person. Salaries too were slow to rise and in 2015 Vidin was once again the district with the lowest average annual gross salary of 7,011 BGN while the national average salary was 10,535 BGN.

In 2016 the annual average income per household member dropped for the second successive year to reach 3,428 BGN while the national average income was 5,167 BGN/person.

These indicators predetermined the relatively high shares of people living in material deprivation and those living in poverty. In 2015 the share of the population living below the national poverty line rose to reach almost half of the population – exceeding the figures in the districts of Kardzhali and Pazardzhik, thus placing Vidin last in the rating chart.

Labor Market ●●●

In 2016, economic activity in the district dropped for the first time after a five-year long period of growth during which it had even reached values higher than the national average. The workforce was 68.2% of the population while it was 68.7% nationwide but unlike the tendency in the other districts, its dropping economic activity was accompanied by a considerable shrinkage of employment. In 2016, the district's employment rate was 57.0% vs. 63.4% in the country. Still, employment retained a higher level compared with the time before and during the crisis. Unemployment dropped though it still remained high: with a rate of 16.4% the district of Vidin had the third highest unemployment rate in the country after Shumen and Silistra – twice the national average of 7.7%.

The population's (aged 25–64) educational structure in the district in 2016 shows that the share of people with primary or lower education was on the decrease and it was the third lowest in the country after the capital and the district of Gabrovo.

Investment ●●

The district's lagging economic development is a reflection of the poor performance of Vidin in this category. The number of enterprises relative to the population remained among the smallest in 2015. FTA expenditure per capita rose considerably but was still relatively low. The picture in foreign investment was similar: in 2015 it rose to 864 euro/person but there was still a fourfold difference from the national average figures.

As of 30th June 2017, 102 m BGN had been utilized from EU operational funds, or 1,129 BGN/person, which was still below national average values of 1,344 BGN/person. Among the district's municipalities the city of Vidin utilized most EU funds – 1,400 BGN/person, while that of Gramada received least funds – 96 BGN/person. Until the beginning of the new program period the latter municipality was the single one in Bulgaria with no sums paid from operational program funds.

Infrastructure ●●●●

Road network density in the district is still above average but Vidin's location in the country's periphery explains why highways and first class roads (12%) make up a considerably lower share than the national average (19%). This also explains the worse quality of roads. In 2016 the share of road surfaces in good condition increased to 40% but remained below the national average of 42%.

Internet access as well as its usage in the district also increased in 2016 and are now above national average values.

Taxes and Fees ●●●●●

The average rates of the monitored taxes and fees in the district's municipalities place it among those with the lowest tax burden. What is more, unlike the widespread raises in local taxes and fees in the country, only one of Vidin's municipalities raised a tax in 2017.

The district stands out among others with its lowest average rate of the annual license tax for retailers (almost three times lower than the national average), mainly because of the rates in the Mokresh and Dimovo municipalities, which are considerably below national average levels. The tax rate for taxi transportation is also the lowest one in the country.

Administration ●●

The ratings of the administration for the development of electronic government and one-stop shop services in the district's municipalities rose in 2017, yet they stayed below national average levels.

There was a similar picture with regard to administration transparency. The district's average rating rose to 50.6% but it was still far below the national average of 59.0%.

Vidin was also one of the districts with the smallest share of its territory covered by cadastral maps. In 2016 it remained at 8% while the national average was 23%. Only 4 municipalities – Vidin, Bregovo, Kula and Novo Selo have partial coverage while the remaining seven have 0% cadastral coverage.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●

Demography ●

The indicators for demographic development place Vidin last among the districts in Bulgaria in this category.

Vidin confirmed its position as the district with the fewest inhabitants and was second in terms of most rapidly ageing population (after the district of Smolyan). In 2016 the natural population growth went on dropping at a fast rate to reach a value almost three times below average: -17% vs. the national average of -6% . Another factor influencing the rapid depopulation of the district is the significant out-migration from it. In 2016 the net migration rate dropped to almost -10% .

Although an increasing number of people in the district live in towns, similar to the general tendency in the country, the share of urban population is still low: 64% (vs. 73.3% in the country). This is the reason for the relatively low population density.

Education ●●●

In 2016 Vidin was one of the districts with the lowest rate of enrolment in 5th–8th grade: 75.6% while the national average was 78.2% . Besides, according to 2015 data, it had the highest share of dropouts from primary and secondary education (3.7% vs. 2.86% nationally).

Some positive tendencies were noticeable in both teacher numbers and matriculation exam results. In 2016 the district succeeded in attracting new teachers in primary and secondary schools so teachers reached a rate of 85 per 1,000 students (vs. 75 per 1,000 students in the country). The 2017 matriculation exam results show that students in the district got higher grades at the exam in BLL compared to the national average grades. Besides, the share of fail grades in the district also went down and remained considerably below the national average level.

Healthcare ●●●

In tune with the rapid population ageing and the fact that pensioners have health-insurance, the share of health-insured people in the district went on increasing and in 2016 it reached 92% , which was above the national average of 86% .

The GP per population ratio in the district was higher than the national average ratio, though the specialist shortage remained problematic in 2016. The number of beds in local hospitals was also lower than the national average: 4.1 beds in general hospitals per 1,000 people (vs. 5.1 beds nationally). The shortage of specialists and the relatively small

number of hospital beds resulted in the relatively small number of hospitalizations as well. 169 per 1,000 people went to hospital in 2016 when the national average rate was 235 per 1,000 people.

Security and Justice ●●●

95% of criminal cases in the district of Vidin were closed within 3 months (vs. 89% on average for Bulgaria), probably as a consequence of the workloads of local judges, which were traditionally low in 2016 as well. A criminal judge in the district court saw 6.5 cases a month while the national average rate reached 9.4 cases per judge.

The rate of registered crimes against the person and property in the district (13.1 per 1,000 people) was higher than the national average rate of 12.6 per 1,000 people. At the same time the crime clearance rate in the district rose in 2016 to reach 57% (vs. 48% nationally).

Environment ●●

Until 2014 Vidin was the only district without a wastewater treatment plant. After the construction of the first plant in the district had been interrupted because of suspicion of embezzlement, the project was resumed in 2017.

The relatively low urbanization level in the district determines the low rate of people living in areas with public sewerage: 57% vs. 76% nationally. The amount of generated household waste was relatively low: 250 kg/person annually (vs. 422 kg/person nationally).

The district is characterized by relatively clean air. In 2015, for the third successive year, carbon dioxide emissions were 142.9 t/sq. km or half the national average values.

Culture ●●●

Theaters and museums in the district continue to attract a considerable number of visitors. In 2016 theater visits rose to 484 per 1,000 people while the national average rate was 322 per 1,000 people. Museum visits reached 1,692 per 1,000 people while the national average rate was 734 per 1,000.

Since 2015 the district has had a cinema. In 2016 it registered 32,000 visits or 358 per 1,000 people (vs. 778 per 1,000 people on average in the country).

Key Indicators for the District of Vidin

Indicators of economic development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	5,546	5,640	5,916	6,066	6,258	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	3,052	3,615	3,614	4,383	3,677	3,428
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	5,532	5,855	6,195	6,663	7,011	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the national poverty line (%)	42.1	39.1	38.1	43.6	48.2	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	62.5	63.2	67.5	71.0	72.3	68.2
Annual average employment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	50.0	52.2	55.6	55.3	58.8	57.0
Annual average unemployment rate of the population aged 15 to 64 (%)	19.8	17.4	17.7	22.2	18.8	16.4
Relative share of the population aged 25 to 64 with tertiary education (%)	18.1	15.7	14.6	17.2	21.5	18.5
Number of non-financial enterprises per 1,000 people	32	32	32	32	34	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	874	1,156	692	925	1,756	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	329	622	615	547	864	n.a.
Relative share of households with internet access (%)	46.6	33.7	44.0	45.4	48.0	67.8
Share of roads in good condition (%)	30.0	29.4	32.3	34.2	32.3	40.2
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	8.2	8.2

Indicators of social development	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-15.2	-16.0	-14.3	-15.2	-16.7	-16.9
Net migration rate (‰)	-1.9	-3.8	-7.1	-7.0	-6.3	-9.5
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.48	4.14	4.23	4.24	4.22	4.20
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams ("average" 3.00)	1.94	8.32	4.83	3.67	6.09	6.04
Net enrolment rate of the population in 5th–8th grade (%)	80.4	80.0	79.2	78.4	77.9	75.6
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	89.8	89.1	88.4	89.8	91.5	91.7
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals per 1,000 people	150.2	148.4	161.6	166.3	168.3	169.4
Registered crimes against the person and property per 1,000 people	15.1	13.9	14.5	13.8	14.4	13.1
Clearance rates for crimes against the person and property registered during the year (%)	42.2	35.5	34.5	36.1	38.1	57.4
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	10.5	10.0	10.0	13.1	7.9	9.0
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WWTP (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	n.a.
Carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere (t/sq. km)	231.7	245.5	142.9	142.9	142.9	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	0	0	0	138	373	358
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	257	280	336	342	382	484