

# Vidin District



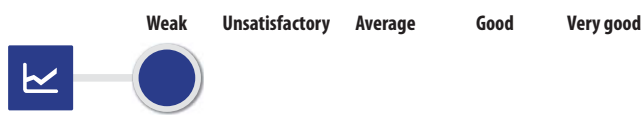
▶ Population (2014)	94,414
▶ Area (sq. km)	3,032.9
▶ Number of settlements	143
▶ Share of urban population (%)	64.4

## Overview

Vidin ranks among the districts with the lowest GDP per capita, the lowest incomes and some of the least favourable indicators for social inclusion and living conditions in Bulgaria. The labour market condition is very poor in the district. Investment activity is low, and two municipalities only (Belogradchik and Vidin) have reached the national average rate of drawing down funds under the EU operational programmes. The tax environment is relatively favourable, but the development of administrative services has lagged considerably. Vidin is the district where the negative demographic

trends are the most visible. In 2012, Vidin became the first district in Bulgaria with less than 100,000 people residing in it. There is no institution of higher education, and the share of graduates relative to the population is low. The population is relatively well provided with general practitioners, and the deficiency of key specialists, even though present, is not that acute when compared to other districts. Vidin was the only district lacking a water treatment plant in 2013, the construction of one started in 2014. The crime rate is about the country average, but the share of pending criminal cases remains high.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



#### Income and Living Conditions



#### Labor Market



#### Investment



#### Infrastructure



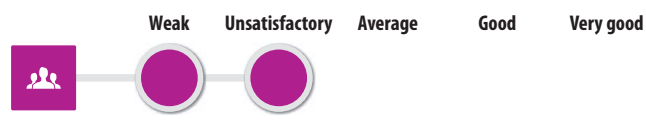
#### Taxes and Fees



#### Administration



### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



#### Demography



#### Education



#### Healthcare



#### Security and Justice



#### Environment



#### Culture



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ●

### Income and Living Conditions ●

Vidin is the district with one of the lowest levels of GDP per capita, the lowest salaries and one of the worst indicators for social inclusion and living conditions in the country. GDP per capita amounted to 5,384 BGN in 2012 – more than two times lower than the country average and 4.5 times lower than the capital city. The average annual gross salary was 6,195 BGN in 2013 compared to the national average of 9,301 BGN. The average salary was lower by 13.1% than the country average in 2000 and lower by 33.4% in 2013.

The share of the population living in households with low work intensity was 27.2% in Vidin. Only Pazardzhik District has a higher value of this indicator – 31.9%. Although the relative poverty line for the district is lower than the country average of 3,431 BGN by 20%, 31.2% of the population lived below it in 2012, which constitutes the second highest share of the poor population among all districts after Sliven District. More than 50% of the population lives in material deprivation.

### Labour market ●

Although the economic activity rate of the population has increased considerably in recent years (from 41.8% in 2009 to 49.8% in 2014), this has mainly been due to the rising unemployment rate.

Following a slight enhancement from 2011 to 2013 (a rise from 35.8% to 39.6%), the employment rate of the population 15+ started to diminish again reaching 38.8% in 2014. Vidin was one of the four districts where the employment rate of the population also remained lower than 40% in 2014, along with the districts of Lovech, Silistra and Vratsa. The annual average unemployment rate reached 22.2% in Vidin in 2014, the highest level since 2005. Only the district of Silistra has a higher unemployment rate, 22.4%.

### Investment ●

Vidin is one of the districts with the lowest investment activity in Bulgaria. Expenditure on the acquisition of FTAs (66.8 m BGN in 2013) relative to the population was the lowest in Bulgaria and amounted to 692 BGN per capita compared to the national average of 2,490 BGN per capita. The (accrued) amount of FDIs already exceeded the pre-crisis peak of 45.0 m euros (as of the end of 2007), reaching 59.3 m euros as of the end of 2013. Relative to the population, this figure amounted to 628.3 BGN per capita compared to the country average of 3,230.9 BGN for the country. The municipalities of Belogradchik and Vidin are the only ones in the district to have achieved a relatively good absorption of funds under the EU operational programmes. All the other municipalities have considerably lagged,

and Gramada Municipality has not received any funds from the EU structural funds yet, as of 31 January 2015.

### Infrastructure ●●●

The road network density (20.1 km per 100 sq. km) was higher in the district than the country average (17.7 km per 100 sq. km), and its railway density was identical with the national average of 3.6 km per 100 sq. km in 2013. In Vidin District, the share of roads in good condition gradually increased from 2013 to 2014 reaching 34.2%. Nevertheless, similarly to other districts in the Northwest Region, the district remains well below the country average of 40.5%.

In 2014 the share of individuals aged 16–74, who had used the Internet exceeded the country average for the first time, reaching 62%. Nonetheless, the share of households with Internet access has remained low – 45.4% for the district compared to 56.7% for Bulgaria.

### % Taxes and Fees ●●●●

The tax environment is relatively favourable, and most local taxes and fees are considerably below the national average. In particular, the average annual licence tax for retailers is the lowest in Bulgaria, and the vehicle tax is the second lowest after Ruse District.

There have been only three alterations in the rates of main local taxes and fees since 2012. Novo Selo Municipality raised the tax on real property owned by legal entities in 2013 (from 2.00‰ to 2.50‰) and the businesses' waste charge (from 2.50‰ to 3.50‰), and Gramada Municipality lowered the annual waste collection charge from 4.00 to 3.60‰.

### Administration ●

The cadastral map encompassed barely 2.1% of the district's territory as of 2014, and all listed territories were located in Vidin Municipality and were listed back in 2008. In 2014 the cadastral map covered 18.1% of the territory on a national scale while it remained unchanged in Vidin District.

The development of e-services and one-stop shop services has considerably lagged. For two years in a row none of the municipalities in the district was rated higher than the country average in the Active Transparency Rating of local government bodies by the AIP Foundation. The weighted average for the district is 34.7 points out of 88.4 points while for Bulgaria it is 54.5 points. The municipalities of Kula (43.1 points) and Belogradchik (42.1 points) scored the highest points while Chuprene (20.1 points) and Ruzhitsi (23.5 points) received the lowest ones.

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ●●

### Demography ●

Vidin is the district where the negative demographic trends are most visible. The population shrank almost three times faster than the country average from 2001 to 2014. In 2012, Vidin became the first district in Bulgaria with less than 100,000 people residing in it. The district is relatively poorly urbanised. 64.4% of the population lives in towns and cities compared to the country average of 73.1%.

The population's age structure impacts the rate of natural increase. Vidin District is the only one where the rate of natural increase has dropped below  $-13\text{‰}$ , and in recent years it has been between  $-14\text{‰}$  and  $-16\text{‰}$ . The net migration rate has also been negative for the past 15 years without exception. The number of people to leave the district decreased in 2011 and 2012 but then went on rising again.

### Education ●●

The enrolment rate was close to the national level of 78.6% in 2014, and the relative share of repeaters was 1.1% compared to the national average of 1.4%. The district's school-leavers have gradually performed better at state matriculation exams, and the average grade was similar to the national one in 2015 – Good (4.21), while the number of failed students remained below the national average.

Vidin is one of the five districts without universities or their branches. This is one of the reasons for the low share of people with college degrees in the district – 17.2% compared to 27.0% for Bulgaria in 2014.

### Healthcare ●●●●●

89.8% of the district's citizens were health-insured persons in 2014, the average for Bulgaria being 87.1%. The second most favourable ratio of the number of general practitioners to the local population, after the district of Pleven, is observed in Vidin District.

The ratio of the number of beds in MpHATs to the local population remained the same as the national average of 4.3 beds per 1,000 people till 2010. The decrease in the number of beds in the district was greater than the decrease in the population, and this ratio was 3.8 beds per 1,000 people in 2014 while the country average rose to 4.8 beds per 1,000 people.

Vidin is one of the districts where the number of inpatients in MpHATs increased in 2014, but it has still demonstrated a relatively low morbidity rate in comparison with the national average. The infant mortality rate continued to be more than 10‰ from 2012 to 2014 and it was one of the highest in the country.

### Security and Justice ●●●

The real workload of penal judges is among the smallest in Bulgaria. On average, there were 5.6 cases per month per judge in the District Court compared to 8.3 cases in the country in 2013. Only Montana and Pernik feature lower workloads. Nonetheless, the share of pending criminal cases did not total less than 10% from 2011 to 2013, and the share of criminal cases completed within 3 months was close to the country level despite the low workload.

Excluding the sharp increase of 2010, the ratio of registered crimes against individuals to the local population was more favourable than that for Bulgaria from 2005 to 2014. The ratio of registered crimes against the person to the population was similar to, but lower than the country average figures in 2013 and 2014 – 96.8 per 1,000 people, and 88.7 per 1,000 people respectively.

### Environment ●●

Vidin is one of the districts with the lowest expenditure on environmental protection – barely 13.1 m BGN in 2013, or 136.3 BGN per capita compared to 288.9 BGN per capita for Bulgaria. The share of the population living in settlements with access to a public sewerage system was 56.6% in 2013 or considerably lower than the country average of 74.7%. Vidin remained the only district in Bulgaria without a water treatment plant in 2013. The construction of one began in 2014 as part of the water cycle project of Vidin City.

Carbon dioxide emissions were half the country average of 293.9 t/sq. km in 2013.

### Culture ●●●

The intensity of cultural life is higher in Vidin District than in most other districts. The annual average number of visits to museums is much lower than the levels recorded in 2009, but their ratio to the population is almost more than double the country average of 662 visits per 1,000 people. Visits to libraries and theatres are also higher than the country average.

The first cinema since 2006 was opened at the end of 2014, and its capacity is 139 seats. A total of 13,000 visits were recorded for the year, which makes 137.7 visits per 1,000 people compared to 706 for Bulgaria. This number of visits was registered in the course of less than 3 months. Maintaining this interest toward films in 2015 would near the country average annual rate of attendances.

## Key Indicators for the District of Vidin

Economic Development	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
GDP per capita (BGN, current prices)	5,174	4,928	5,327	5,384	n.a.	n.a.
Average annual income per household member (BGN)	3,385	2,794	3,052	3,615	3,614	4,383
Average annual gross salary (BGN)	5,251	5,422	5,532	5,855	6,195	n.a.
Relative share of people living below the district's poverty line (%)	29.3	36.2	34.1	31.2	n.a.	n.a.
Annual average economic activity rate of the population 15+ (%)	41.8	40.2	44.7	44.8	48.2	49.8
Annual average employment rate of the population 15+ (%)	36.4	35.0	35.8	37.0	39.6	38.8
Annual average unemployment rate (%)	13.0	13.1	19.8	17.4	17.7	22.2
Number of non-financial companies per 1,000 people	34	33	32	32	32	n.a.
Expenditure on the acquisition of fixed tangible assets per capita (BGN)	701	492	874	1,156	692	n.a.
Cumulative FDI to non-financial enterprises per capita (EUR)	165	312	329	622	628	n.a.
Relative share of households with Internet access (%)	25.3	27.7	46.6	33.7	44.0	45.4
Share of roads in good condition (%)	n.a.	43.4	30.0	29.4	32.3	34.2
Share of territory included in cadastral maps (%)	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1

Social Development	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Rate of natural increase (‰)	-13.8	-14.8	-15.2	-16.0	-14.3	-15.2
Net migration rate (‰)	-6.9	-6.2	-1.9	-3.8	-7.1	-7.0
Relative share of the population aged 25–64 with tertiary education (%)	16.4	18.9	18.1	15.7	14.6	17.2
Average grades at state matriculation exams	4.2	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.2
Percent of failed students at state matriculation exams	6.2	3.6	1.9	8.3	4.8	3.7
Health insured persons as share of the population (%)	89.5	86.7	89.8	89.1	88.4	89.8
Cases of hospitalization in general hospitals	160.4	142.7	150.2	148.4	161.6	166.3
Crimes against the property per 10,000 people	79.1	110.7	92.8	74.7	96.8	88.7
Share of pending criminal cases (%)	8.5	8.2	10.5	10.0	10.0	n.a.
Expenditure on environmental protection per capita (BGN)	35.5	55.6	79.0	68.7	136.3	n.a.
Share of the population living in settlements with public sewerage systems, connected to WTPP (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	n.a.
Number of visits to cinemas per 1,000 people	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	137.7
Number of visits to theatres per 1,000 people	194.1	237.7	257.2	280.3	336.3	342.0