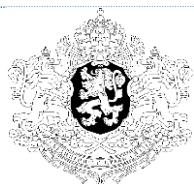


## Sustainable Transport and Tourism along the Danube

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### WP3: TRANSPORT AND TOURISM SYSTEM ANALYSIS STATUS QUO/STATE OF THE ART VIDIN REGION/BULGARIA EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA  
REGIONAL GOVERNOR OF VIDIN REGION**

WP 4/Action SEE/D0060/3.1/X

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Version/ Date

28.06.2013



## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The district of Vidin is located in the north-western part of Bulgaria. The region covers an area of 3,022 square metres, which is 2.7% of the territory of Bulgaria. To the north the area borders Romania, to the west – Serbia, to the south it is bounded by the Balkan Mountains, and to the east it is bordered by the district of Montana. The geographical position of Vidin has favoured its development as a transport, trade, cultural and political centre. Strategic importance has the northern boundary of the region - the Danube, which determines opportunities for cooperation with other countries in the Danube region. In 2011 the population of the district is 101,018 inhabitants.

In connection with the two borders, Bulgaria - Serbia and Bulgaria - Romania, four border crossing points are available in the region:

- Border crossing Vrashka Chuka (Bulgaria - Serbia), connecting Koula (Bulgaria) and Zaichar (Serbia).
- Border crossing Bregovo (Bulgaria - Serbia), connecting Bregovo (Bulgaria) and Negotin (Serbia).
- Vidin border checkpoint - River Station, which is located in the central part of Vidin and services the vessels on the Danube.
- Border crossing - Vidin Ferry, which is located two kilometres from the town of Vidin in the north industrial area. It serves the ferry Vidin (Bulgaria) - Calafat (Romania).

Very soon one more border crossing point, namely the Danube Bridge 2 „Vidin-Calafat”, will be open and will be able to serve cars, trucks, buses, trains and individuals.

### 1.1 Transport system in Vidin region

#### 1.1.1 Water transport

The only navigable river and main artery within the Vidin region is the Danube River, which provides an exclusive opportunity for the development of the water transport. The city of Vidin lies on the right bank of the Danube and has four port terminals: North Port Terminal, Motor ferryboat terminal, Port Terminal “Centre” and Port Terminal South. The second one is specialized in the transportation of passengers and vehicles by “Ro-Ro” ships.

#### 1.1.2 Air transport

Near Vidin in about 6 km close to the village of Inovo (Vidin Municipality), is situated a civil airport which was built in 1973, but not function since 1999. By the end of 2012 the airport still has not achieved results concerning the operation of Vidin’s Airport.

#### 1.1.3 Railway transport

According to the National Statistics Institute (NSI), at the end of 2012 the length of the railway lines in Vidin district is 101 km, 80 km from which are electrified and they are part of the main line (№7) Sofia - Vidin. The line serves the local municipalities of Rujintsi, Dimovo, Makresh, Gramada and Vidin. The other six municipalities in Vidin region: Belogradchik, Bregovo, Boynitsa, Koula, Novo Selo and Chuprene do not have direct rail access to the regional centre Vidin and to the remaining part of the country.

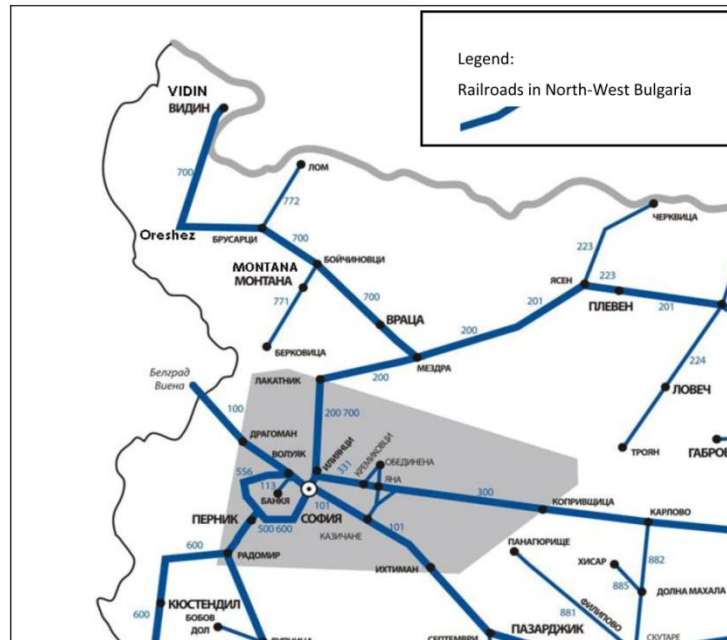


Figure 1 Rail road's in North-West Bulgaria

### 1.1.4 Road transport

In the territory of Vidin pass two Trans - European transport corridors - №4 Dresden/Nuremberg - Prague - Vienna/Bratislava - Budapest - Craiova (Romania) - Vidin - Sofia - Koulata - Thessaloniki/Plovdiv - Istanbul, which connects Central with South East Europe. The other one is №7 Rhine - Main - Danube which connects the Black Sea and the North Sea.

### 1.1.5 Transport accessibility to the main tourist directions

| Transportation options to the tourist directions |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Direction Vidin</b>                           | Established transport schemes with routes and destinations.                                                                                                                               |
|                                                  | Bus lines (№1, №2 и №4) that provide easy access to the tourist attractions within the municipality.                                                                                      |
|                                                  | Regular transport between the city of Vidin and the other big settlements in the municipality.                                                                                            |
|                                                  | Rich fleet of taxis for quick and easy access to all tourist attractions.                                                                                                                 |
|                                                  | Important role in the redistribution of the transport and tourist flow through the municipality and the region will be the putting into operation of the Danube Bridge 2.                 |
| <b>Conclusions/ Recommendations</b>              | Within the city of Vidin are developed many cycling routes, most of which are continuation of the neighboring countries.                                                                  |
|                                                  | Currently the road network within the municipality of Vidin does not satisfy the European standards.                                                                                      |
|                                                  | General technical status of the roads is good.                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                  | Not developed route schedules, related to the existing tourist sites. Account the possibilities for combined transport, it is recommended to be developed ones to the main tourist sites. |
|                                                  | Need for a targeted advertising to promote cycling routes.                                                                                                                                |
| Transportation options to the tourist directions |                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Direction Belogradchik</b>                    | The municipality is served mainly by road transport - close crosses class road E-79.                                                                                                      |
|                                                  | Access to the railway transport is done through station Oreshets, by which has a regular bus connection.                                                                                  |
|                                                  | Existence of 13 municipal roads (with length 50 km), which play a crucial role in the tourism development.                                                                                |
| <b>Conclusions/ Recommendations</b>              | Satisfactory condition of the general road infrastructure within the municipality.                                                                                                        |
|                                                  | Serious deficiency is the limited accessibility to the tourist attractions of the municipality.                                                                                           |
|                                                  | Access to the tourist sites is predominantly by roads.                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                  | Urgen need to repair most of the III-th and IV-th class road network.                                                                                                                     |

|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                         | Need for better organization of the public transport which connects the settlements and the tourist sites in the municipality.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                                         | Necessity of the providing more accessible information about public transport within the municipality.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                         | Insufficiently secured public transport between neighboring and a complementary tourist centres.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                                                         | Insufficient transport connections between accomodation bases and the resource areas.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Transportation options to the tourist directions</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Direction Dimovo</b>                                 | In the municipality crosses part of the rail way line Vidin - Sofia.<br>The existence of two railway stations along the route - Dimovo and Oreshets.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                         | The public transport serves less than 1/3 of the population.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Conclusions/ Recommendations</b>                     | Most of the villages are not provided with public transport.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Transportation options to the tourist directions</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Direction Chuprene</b>                               | Chuprene municipality is the furthest municipality of the Vidin region.<br>The distance to the nearest highway "Hemus" and class road E-79, respectively is 140 and 22 km.<br>In the municipality passes III-th (2) and IV-th (3) class roads.<br>The nearest rail station is Oreshets, located about 30 km from the municipality of Chuprene.                                                                                                 |
| <b>Conclusions/ Recommendations</b>                     | Passing through the territory of the municipality republican and municipal roads are repaired every year and they are in good status.<br>There is an urgent need to repair the roads in the direction of Stara Planina Mountain which lead to the tourist sites in the region.<br>Daily connection to the city of Vidin and Belogradchik there is only on weekdays, which prevent the use of the public bus transport by tourists on weekends. |
| <b>Transportation options to the tourist directions</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Direction Novo Selo</b>                              | The close proximity to the Danube River and the presence of a port and a border within the territory of Novo Selo contribute both to the development of water tourism in the region and the combination of the bus with water transport.<br>The existence of a III-th class road which status is satisfactory. Necessity of partial repairs.                                                                                                   |
| <b>Conclusions/ Recommendations</b>                     | Necessity of repairs to IV-th class road network in the municipality, which will facilitate the movement of tourist to the natural attractions.<br>Are also needed repair works to the foot of Danube.<br>Performing a complete architectural and art design of the port and of landing site for the international TID regatta.                                                                                                                |
| <b>Transportation options to the tourist directions</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Direction Koula</b>                                  | Connects to all locations in the country by road transport.<br>The road network is represented by the II-nd, III-th and IV-th class roads.<br>In connection with the CBC will be opened a new bus line Vidin - Koula - Zaychar.<br>Road markings and signs in the municipality is regularly maintained.                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Conclusions/ Recommendations</b>                     | Needs to be repaired III-rd class roads within the municipality that are in bad status.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

Table 1 Analysis of the transport accessibility to the main tourist directions within the Vidin region (Source: WP3 Transport and tourism system analysis)

### 1.1.6 Transportation and tourism information systems in Vidin region

The available and accessible to tourist's information about the tourist sites, about public transport and attractions within the territory of Vidin region is essential for the tourism development in the district. Although the existing potential for tourism development within the municipalities - Vidin, Belogradchik, Dimovo and Chuprene, however not all of them have a tourist information centers. All of them provide Information on tourist attractions in the region should be noted that the maps in Vidin with tourist facilities are insufficient, and moreover lacks sufficient signs and having their course.

### **1.1.7 Tourism sector in Vidin region**

The tourism is considered as to be a priority in the economic development of Vidin region. Real development potential for its development has the following municipalities: Belogradchik, Vidin, Dimovo, Koula and Chuprene.

### **1.1.8 Tourist attractions (destinations)**

The report makes overview of over 40 destinations in all the Municipalities located in Vidin region.

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### **1.1.9 Statistical tourism data**

Employees in the territory of Vidin in 2011 were 18 322 people, 725 people, or 4% of which are employed in the hotel and restaurants sector. Employees in culture, sports and entertainment sector within the region were 280 persons, who representing 2% of employment in the economy of the region.

### **1.1.10 Tourism enterprises**

There is a considerable growth in the tourist enterprise production - income from operations and net sales (respectively 68%, 66% and 63% for culture, sports and entertainment sector and 4%, 14% and 14% for hotel and restaurant sector).

In 2012, the Vidin region accounts for about 1% of the number of shelter and accommodation facilities, persons accommodated, and of indicators related to the development of domestic tourism - nights spent by Bulgarians, Bulgarians overnights and income spent by Bulgarians of the total number in the country.

## 2 ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK. FINANCIAL ISSUES

In the last years a wide range of regional and local plans and strategies have been developed for Vidin region. All the strategic documents have been developed to overcome the accumulated negative developments in the region. Significant weakness is incomplete regarding the specific funding sources for the implementation of the priorities and objectives of the strategies. At the municipal level, all the plans follow a single development methodology that aims to highlight the features and advantages of the municipal territory.

## 3 CONCLUSIONS

As a result of the provided executive summary of the regional SoA report (status quo and SWOT), we can make the following conclusions, which are divided into four topics - transport and information system, tourism sector and relevant framework conditions:

Transport system:

- Despite of the exclusive potential by the Danube River by this moment in the Vidin region remains unrealized.
- The development of the railway transport in Vidin district is under the national average.
- Although the Vidin territory passes two Trans-European transport corridors (№ 4 and № 7). The development of №4 is exclusively based on the international automobile traffic.
- In the territory of Vidin region do not exist highways.

Information systems:

- Although the existing potential for tourism development within the municipalities Vidin, Belogradchik, Dimovo and Chuprene, not all of them have tourist information centers.
- The region of Vidin is less known on the international tourist market, which is due to the poor performance of advertising and information systems for the offered tourist services.

Tourism sector:

- The municipality of Vidin has the potential to develop the following different types of tourism: cultural and historical, ecotourism, sport tourism (hunting and fishing), water, cave, wellness tourism, rural, cruise, thematic wine and weekend and alternative (mountain, adventure, cycling) tourism.