

Need to implement targeted policies for regional development in the administrative districts of Sliven and Shumen, in the context of the regional economy

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Abstract. This exhibition is dedicated to the regional development of two administrative districts in Bulgaria. These are the districts of Shumen, which is located in Northern Bulgaria and the district of Sliven in Southern Bulgaria. The two districts have similar problems and regional problems. As on the basis of geo-economics analysis, assessment of their demographic potential, their infrastructural security is made a characteristic of both areas and their regional potential. Relevant problem areas, opportunities for conducting targeted regional development policies and recommendations for improving regional policies are presented. The comparative analysis of such spatial units gives us the opportunity to subject to regional analysis separate administrative units and to propose measures for their regional development.

1 Introduction

The processes of integration and the changes in the global plan again brought the problems of the regional development as the Achilles' heel in the attempt of rapprochement of Bulgaria in relation to the other countries of the European Union. In practice, regional development is a complex process in which it is crucial to understand the functional scope of the implemented regional development policy. In this direction, the administrative-territorial units of the second rank of the districts have a largely conservative status, because they usually have a vision and concept for the regional level mainly on the territory of the district [3]. In addition, at the district level, the territorial imbalance stands out most clearly, as well as the complex development of the administrative units in them. This predetermines the need for the current exhibition to consider the districts of Sliven and Shumen. In practice, Sliven district is located in Southern Bulgaria and Shumen district in Northern Bulgaria, but the two districts are essentially neighboring and even have a small common border. This territorial approach gives us grounds to determine the purpose of our exhibition to bring out those targeted regional development policies that may have an effect on the economic development of these areas [10]. The research approach requires us to find that in the last few years the

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social and economic imbalances of the regional centers and their settlements have outlined serious problems in their regional development. On the other hand, the policy of cohesion imposed by the European institutions in economic, social and territorial aspects is difficult to implement in Bulgarian conditions. Moreover, there is even a deterioration of most Bulgarian planning regions, as well as an additional contrast in internal regional development at the level of municipalities in the individual regions. Thus, with regard to Bulgaria, the European institutions can assume that there is a new focus on regional policy. One of the new focuses on the attempt to create a balanced, proportionately developing and sustainable housing system by providing conditions for access to quality housing (own or rented) to meet the needs of Bulgarian citizens. The vision for renovation of the housing stock is among the main priorities, as it has a direct bearing on the aspects and requirements of sustainable development. This shows that the quality of life of the Bulgarians has deteriorated, unfavorable transport accessibility has been established, which leads to impaired polycentric connectivity between the settlements. The emerging negative demographic trends are also accelerating regional disparities in terms of population [11]. In addition, the European institutions want to impose a model of an integrated territorial approach to the management of territorial units requires at the district level to create conditions for capacity building implementation of these policies in the period 2021-2027. The first task is to work at the district level to create roadmaps for new approaches in regional policy in order to create conditions for balanced territorial development. for its implementation, as with regard to territorial authorities. Secondly, to take into account the share of the population with an emphasis on the migrant population (internal migration), the state of regional business, the level of consumption of goods and services, the number of reconstructed / restored cultural and historical sites, flood or forest fire protection measures, improved housing infrastructure. Important indicators are also the number of training and qualification initiatives in line with the labor market demand, the number of residents benefiting from the improved infrastructure and several other indicators to give a real idea of the socio-economic condition of the districts and municipalities in them [6]. Thirdly, it is necessary to create sustainable regional trade centers and build industrial zones related to sectors of agriculture, food industry, tourism, and others as a lasting mechanism for recovery and optimization of economies at macro, local and micro levels. Following these findings, it should be said that the economic and geographical condition of the districts is a strong factor in the formation of strategic goals at NUTS 3 level in the Republic of Bulgaria and a starting point for achieving desired results related to the development of society at district level [4]. Thus, in the present presentation, on the basis of the two administrative units, we will try to carry out a territorial segmentation of the districts, through which we can highlight their problems and propose the necessary measures for improving the regional development in them.

Geoeconomic concentration of the districts of Sliven and Shumen

In the national space the two districts Sliven and Shumen are adjacent, but due to the imposed spatial characteristics they are situated in the north-south direction, as Shumen district is accepted as part of the northern part of the country and Sliven district part of Southern Bulgaria. Careful spatial analysis imposes the need to consider the two areas separately so that we can compare their features and derive the emerging geoeconomics patterns. In the north-south territory, Shumen district is located in the central part of Northeastern Bulgaria and has an area of 3.39 thousand square kilometers, which is nearly 3.05% of the country's territory. It is part of the Northeast region of level 2, which includes the neighboring districts of Varna, Dobrich and Targovishte. Shoumen District consists of 10 municipalities (Veliki Preslav, Venets, Varbitsa, Kaolinovo, Kaspichan, Nikola Kozlevo, Novi Pazar, Smyadovo, Hitrino, Shoumen) and 151 settlements, of which 8 towns and 143 villages. In practice, apart from the municipality of Varbitsa and partly the municipality of Veliki Preslav, which have a clear mountain character, the other 8 districts are flat and have

a pronounced agricultural character. To a large extent, the regional center of Shumen, which has a population of about 89 thousand people, is of key importance for regional development. It is a traditional administrative center in the area. In recent years, the city of Shumen is trying to become an industrial center with opportunities for development of technological and competitive industries. This role is derived from its outline as a high-ranking transport and communication hub with good transport accessibility.



Image 1. Shumen region Source: Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, NSI

Moreover, there is a significant degree of development of the energy, communication, gas transmission and water management systems. Shumen is a traditional educational and cultural center for the region. In the district, as partial balancers of Shumen, they have the town of Veliki Preslav to the south, and the towns of Novi Pazar and Kaspichan to the northeast. The other cities on the territory of the district are of less importance for the urban development and are characterized by a smaller number of urban functions (1).

At the same time, Sliven region is located in southeastern Bulgaria, south of Stara Planina. It has an area of 3544,066 square kilometers or nearly 3.19% of the country's territory. Administratively, the district is divided into 4 municipalities - Sliven, Nova Zagora, Kotel and Tvarditsa. In Sliven district the settlement network covers 116 settlements, of which 6 towns and 110 villages (5). The regional center is the city of Sliven - 97,504 inhabitants, which is one of the largest cities in Bulgaria. The settlement network in the territory of the district has been formed depending on the natural and terrain conditions and in view of the development of the livelihood of the population. In the territorial structure of Sliven district there are two areas close in area, but different in nature - northern mountain and semi-mountain and southern plain. This character of the territory has affected the way of land use and the structure of the settlement network. In practice, the regional center of Sliven is of key importance for the regional development, and the city of Nova Zagora is a partial balancer. The towns of Tvarditsa and Kotel are less developed, where the mountain conditions are of decisive importance, in which a relatively small number of settlements remain functioning.



Image 2. Sliven region, Source: Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, NSI

The mountainous part of the territory has remained a little aside from the processes of urbanization and industrialization of settlements, and especially after 1990 leads to population decline. However, the demographic picture in Sliven district remains one of the most favorable in the country in 2020 and is characterized by a relatively high birth rate [4]. The natural growth rate is the second highest in the country after that of the capital, although it is negative, as in the whole country. Emigration from the district remains relatively high, but Sliven remains the district with the youngest population. The comparative analysis between the two districts shows that they are close in territory, have a small common border, and have similar indicators in terms of population. In general, however, large intra-regional inequalities and contrast in the way of life in the central and peripheral municipalities are valid for both districts. For both areas can be found a traditionally diverse structure of the economy with a clear potential and real contribution to the industrial development of the country. In addition, however, there is a monostructural economy in small municipalities with outdated production capacity and lack of sustainable production. In recent years, a somewhat major problem has been the growing percentage of those not enrolled or dropping out of the education system [4]. A high share of early school leavers is reported for both areas according to expert assessment. In practice, it is important for both areas to be able to create conditions for the development of regional business. We can assume that the modern development of a region depends on the level of productivity of the enterprises located on its territory. Small and medium enterprises, which are the foundation of the regional economy. They create a significant part of the gross domestic product and provide employment for the population. In this aspect, the specific potential of the local economy can be activated by creating a number of small and medium enterprises, grouped in clusters between the districts of Shumen and Sliven. This will create an opportunity for favorable conditions for improving regional connectivity and peripheral municipalities such as Veliki Preslav and Varbitsa to cooperate with the municipalities of Kotel and Tvarditsa. In practice, these municipalities have a similar profile and hence opportunities for clustering [2]. The municipalities of Sliven and Shumen may also be in a similar situation, rationally using the opportunity for better economic integration between the two districts. At the same time, the municipality of Nova Zagora has a similar profile to the municipalities of Kaspichan and Novi Pazar. Most of the municipalities in both districts need business support for technological renewal of production facilities, use of innovations, development of green economic activities and regional economic integration. Most municipalities need to encourage processes by creating economic and technological zones where businesses receive full support from the public sector. A

similar positive example can be found with the Municipality of Sliven, which has structured a clear concept for the establishment of a municipal development company. This is Burshen Industrial Zone, with an area of 2600 decares. All communications and technical infrastructure are to be built in order to be able to offer potential investors ready-to-build plots at an affordable price for a commitment to investment and jobs. A similar successful project between a private investor and the Municipality of Shumen is the joint-stock company - Industrial Park Shumen AD. The model of this partnership is the built industrial-commercial and logistics zone Industrial Park Shumen on an area of 2,400,000 square meters. The new company finances the project by transforming undeveloped agricultural land into an industrial park with all necessary infrastructure solutions. In the industrial zone conditions are created for investments and development of productions. The result is the creation of a modern and multifunctional business area to meet the needs of a fast-growing industry. These two examples show that in the management of regional development the spatial development of the territory and the provision of the respective infrastructure must be of leading importance.

Analysis of the infrastructure security between the districts of Shumen and Sliven

Apart from the national road network in both districts, the transport service is complemented by the municipal road network, which carries out the communications between the settlements within the municipalities. The condition of municipal roads is often deteriorating, they need renovation, modernization and geoprotection measures. In winter conditions, especially since the roads in mountainous areas are difficult to pass. In spatial terms, in the district of Shumen, the axis of urban development in the direction of Shumen, Kaspichan and Novi Pazar is brought to the fore. It is a fragment of the primary national axis of development in Northern Bulgaria "Sofia - Varna", but the city of Shumen remains somewhat of peripheral importance compared to the Hemus Motorway. At the same time in Sliven district the main urbanization axis Sliven-Nova Zagora-Tvarditsa is part of one of the main parallel national axes including the sub-Balkan road Sofia-Karlovo - Kazanlak – Tvarditsa – Sliven -Burgas. However, after the construction of the Trakia Motorway, it does not have the same meaning and role, which leads to a decrease in the centrifugal importance of the city of Sliven. In practice, the spatial model of the proposed national transport scheme has a negative impact on the cities of Shumen and Sliven, because they are peripheral and do not play a significant role in freight transport and development of the national economy. This can be partially compensated by the development of a meridional direction north-south in the first place along the axis "Venets-Hitrino-Shumen-Veliki Preslav - Mengishevo - Yablanovo-Kotel-Gradets-Sliven-Yambol-Lesovo as part of the meridional axis " Silistra - Shumen - Yambol - Lesovo - Istanbul". This means that in the mountainous part between the districts of Shumen and Sliven to build new roads and to renovate the old ones in order to improve transport accessibility. In the period until 2030, it is possible to work on the renovation of the Varbishki Pass, increasing the permeability of the Kotlenski Pass and other transport solutions, seeking funds from the European Union. In addition, the two districts of Shumen and Sliven may seek opportunities for closer integration with the districts of Targovishte and Burgas in terms of building reliable connections in the north-south direction. In reality, the improvement of transport accessibility and connectivity will be favorable for the creation of an investment climate that uses the opportunities of both areas. This will create new jobs and increase employment. It is important to attract and support new industries and services that create higher added value and therefore generate growth and higher paid jobs in the smaller municipalities in both districts. Another problem area with regard to the two districts of Shumen and Sliven is the systemic problems in the drinking water supply. They are largely due to the reduced flow of karst springs supplying the water supply system. This necessitates the search for opportunities for reconstruction and modernization of the obsolete water supply network, in order to reduce the extremely high losses of drinking water. It is also necessary

to build new water sources, such as the resumption of the project for the construction of the Bratan Dam. The dam is designed to be built on the Saralandere River, 8 km away. west of the village of Ticha and 1 km. south of the village of Bratan. The catchment area is 27.4 km². The situation with the sewerage system in both areas has worsened. Sewerage network is built only in large settlements, in the rest septic tanks and irrigation wells are used, which leads to groundwater pollution. The physical condition of the sewerage network, built almost entirely with concrete profiles, is satisfactory, but their service life has expired and their gradual replacement is necessary. The water supply and sewerage infrastructure in the district definitely needs completion and modernization [10]. Urgent measures are needed to replace obsolete water pipes to reduce extremely high losses, as well as to complete sewerage networks, upgrade existing ones and build new wastewater treatment plants. Other examples of infrastructure deficits can be given, but in general the construction of a number of infrastructure projects will increase the employment of the local population and, on the other hand, will create conditions for attracting investments within the two areas. The normalization of the water supply will open new opportunities for the development of the tourism industry and will stop the depopulation of a large mountainous area on the territory of Sliven and Shumen districts.

Status of employment and unemployment in the districts of Sliven and Shumen.

The labor market is highly inertial, its stagnation or recovery is manifested with a significant time lag after the manifestations of financial and economic factors. In recent years, according to the data of the National Static Institute, there is a slight decrease in the number of economically active persons in Sliven district, which by 2020 is nearly 80.8 thousand people. By relative share of the population aged 15 and over - 53.6% (compared to 56.6% for the country as a whole). The economic activity rate is 63.5% for men and 44.4% for women, respectively. In terms of economic activity coefficient, Sliven district is on the fifteenth place in the country.

Table 1. Population as of 31.12.2020 by district Sliven, municipalities, residence and sex

District Municipality	Total		Total		
	all	Men	Women	City	Village
Sliven	182 551	88 576	93 975	119 023	63 528
Kotel	17 887	8 864	9 023	5 003	12 884
Nova Zagora	34 758	16 880	17 878	19 939	14 819
Sliven	116 666	56 262	60 404	84 878	31 788
Tvarditsa	13 240	6 570	6 670	9 203	4 037

Source: NSI

At the beginning of 2021 the economically active persons aged 15 - 64 years in Sliven district are 78.5 thousand, or 69.0% of the population of the same age, respectively 77.1% for men and 60.6% for women compared to the previous period the coefficient of economic activity (15 - 64 years of age) increased by 1.0 percentage point. The total number of employed persons reached 75.6 thousand, or 50.1% of the population aged 15 and over, compared to 54.2% for the country. The employment rate is 58.9% for men and 41.9% for women, respectively. In terms of employment rate, Sliven district is on the sixteenth place in the country. The employed persons aged 15 - 64 years are 73.4 thousand. The employment rate for the population in the same age group was 64.5%, respectively 71.5% for men and 57.2% for women. The age group 35-44 years of age - 79.9%, has the highest employment rate, as the number of employees in this group is 20.1 thousand. The highest employment rate is among persons with higher education - 68.6%, and among persons with primary and

lower education its value is 32.4%. Similar data from the National Statistical Institute in 2020 are also noted in Shumen district, where the economically active persons (employed and unemployed) aged 15-64 are 82.8 thousand. The economic activity rate increased by 0.8 percentage points compared to 2019. The total number of employed persons in the population aged 15 and over reaches 76.8 thousand. The employed persons aged 15 - 64 were 73.4 thousand, of which 40.6 thousand (55.3%) were men and 32.8 thousand (44.7%) were women. In the indicated age interval, the largest is the share of the employed in the range from 45 to 54 years - 28.3%, and the lowest - in the age from 15 to 24 years. The share of employed persons with higher education reaches 28.1% of all employed persons. 51.4% have secondary education and 20.5% have primary or lower education. The employment rate for the population aged 15-64 is 66.5% and is 0.1 percentage points lower than in 2019. The employment rate for men is 72.3% and is higher than for women - 60.6%. In 2020 in Shumen district the unemployed persons aged 15 to 64 are 9.4 thousand and compared to 2019 their number increases by 1.0 thousand. In the indicated age interval, the unemployment rate increased by 1.1 percentage points compared to 2019 and reached 11.3%, compared to the national average of 5.2%. In 2020 in Shumen district the economically inactive persons aged 15 - 64 years are 27.6 thousand, of which 10.7 thousand are men and 16.9 thousand – women [12].

Table 2. Population as of 31.12.2020 by district Shumen, municipalities, residence and sex

Areas	Total population			Sity	Village
	total	M	W	total	total
Shumen district	171 781	83 696	88 085	102 877	68 904
Veliki Preslav	12 148	5 969	6 179	6 916	5 232
Venez	7 145	3 550	3 595	-	7 145
Varbitza	10 412	5 237	5 175	3 352	7 060
Kaolinovo	12 888	6 454	6 434	1 512	11 376
Kaspichan	7 478	3 685	3 793	3 532	3 946
Nikola Kozlevo	6 310	3 176	3 134	-	6 310
Novi pazar	15 799	7 690	8 109	10 939	4 860
Smiadovo	6 109	2 963	3 146	3 629	2 480
Hitrino	7 105	3 576	3 529	-	7 105
Shumen	86 387	41 396	44 991	72 997	13 390

Source: NSI, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy

This demographic picture shows that both areas still have the opportunity to reduce the negative trends in relation to their population, but this must be changed through economic measures and improving the educational structure of the population. A comprehensive socio-economic policy is needed at the municipal level in both Shumen and Sliven districts.

Guidelines and measures for the development of territorial cooperation

The measures that can be implemented are related to the development of partnership projects between the municipalities of Sliven and Shumen districts for joint use of resources and protection of natural and cultural heritage, marketing initiatives in the region and attracting investment and visitor interest. It is important to look for opportunities for shared capacity in terms of development of territorial cooperation and interaction for the provision

of services by regional and municipal administrations, as well as the implementation of partnership initiatives with other regions in Europe and Bulgaria. The better information environment and publicity in the implementation of the measures envisaged in the strategy will create objective preconditions and conditions for attracting and effective use of more internal and external resources, incl. funds from EU funds for the development of the two districts of Shumen and Sliven. In practice, the two areas need to move towards creating a better business environment and attracting investment in existing economic activities, mobilizing their specific potential and growth factors, and improving their quality. Insufficiently well utilized resources include natural resources and cultural heritage [7]. It is necessary to implement measures for the effective use and valorization of these specific potentials in all parts of the two areas, while protecting the environment and improving environmental conditions. Thus, regional development policies must meet the necessary clarification of the relationship between population change and socio-economic development, on the one hand, the condition, qualitative and quantitative of the population, is the foundation for the development of economic factors, and on the other - change demographic indicators are based on the development of socio-economic conditions. In social terms, one of the most important issues for the development of the districts of Sliven and Shumen is determined by the demographic crisis. We can assume that the two district cities of Sliven and Shumen have a satisfactory demographic structure, but the small municipalities and settlements in both districts have become a net donor of manpower to the surrounding district centers, and the symmetrical population loss describes the situation in the settlements. places as very unpleasant from a demographic point of view (9). The problems of regional development are increasingly associated with a declining population due to negative mechanical and natural growth, lack of investment, young population, highly qualified staff and others [11]. Their emergence is inextricably linked to the political, and hence the economic changes that occurred during the transition to a market economy. The forecasts are ongoing processes of emigration from the districts of Shumen and Sliven, which further creates preconditions for deterioration of age, gender, education and others. types of population structures. The tendency of reduction of the contingent of population of working age leads to limitation of the active population of Shumen district and Sliven district, from which their labor force is formed. The high share of the inactive population is a constraint on economic growth. The share of young people who neither study nor work is also very high. One of the reasons is their low suitability for the labor market and emerging problems with human resources in the two districts of Shumen and Sliven. A step in this direction can be the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the road Shumen - Veliki Preslav - Varbitsa-Sliven. This is an example of improving the connectivity and condition of the roads of the Republican road network and the municipal roads on the territory of the two districts. Another important example is the possibility of tourism in both areas to receive a serious boost. Tourism can integrate and mobilize business circles in the municipalities of Shumen district, as well as those in Sliven district, mainly due to the great wealth of cultural heritage and mountain scenery (6). With proper development in both areas, tourism can develop as a serious economic activity that diversifies the economy of the municipalities on both sides of the Balkan Mountains, while creating attractive jobs for young people. Development of natural, cultural and historical attractions - restoration, protection, exhibition, equipment, introduction of techniques and programs for interpretation and animation, etc. can support local economic potential. The road is through construction and renovation of specialized infrastructure for utilization of tourist resources in both areas. An important model for the development of both areas can be to increase the efficiency of agricultural production by modernizing working conditions and diversifying the rural economy. The realization of the priority will lead to the improvement of the competitiveness of the agricultural production, at the same time it will guarantee the increase of the degree of sustainable and efficient use

of the resources in the branch. The priority activities are aimed at the structural balancing of the agricultural sector, overcoming the technological backwardness, increasing the overall productivity, improving and protecting the environment, building hydro-ameliorative structures. In general, the regional development of the districts of Shumen and Sliven has many opportunities, but needs strong regional business, which should be supported by regional programs that bring out the strengths of the two districts and achieve closer economic integration. An important stimulus can be the integrated approach of territorial management, which can be joined by Targovishte district and the municipalities of Sungurlare, Karnobat and Aytos from Burgas district [8]. By implementing the integrated territorial investment approach, including comprehensive programs at inter-district as well as at municipal level to support vocational education and training of young people. As well as to make specialized national programs for the development of a larger regional economic space. This is an opportunity to solve the problems in terms of human resources in both districts, but also in Targovishte district and Burgas municipalities, which in turn will create conditions for the retention of young people in their homeland. Strengthening the role of small and medium-sized enterprises through focused regional programs is another important component to develop the regional economy (9). Therefore, within both areas, impacts need to be made to diversify the economic activities, products and services of companies and farms in response to changing market needs / demand, especially in rural and remote areas, so as to ensure their long-term sustainability.

2 Conclusion

By displaying certified data and indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the districts in Bulgaria, we will be able to make simulation models for modeling regional development. On the other hand, regional development policy enables us to implement measures including regional aid for critical areas and to apply specific approaches to economic development. This means supporting and prioritizing the development of areas that can become locomotives of progress and development, as well as life projects in areas with extreme difficulties in the appropriate dosing of infrastructure, economic and social measures. At the same time creating conditions for the revival of others or the preservation of others that may fall into disrepair.

In this sense, regional development characterizes the scheme or model of development of the country as a whole but highlighting the relevant needs for local specific policies within the national space. This presupposes a significant level of decentralization and effective management of regional development, so that the respective autonomous space for realizing the potential and the comparative advantages can be determined - for each separate territorial community. This includes better participation in national and international markets in the global framework of the national development strategy. The combination of the vertical and horizontal hierarchy of the territorial systems studied by the regional development enables it to participate creatively in the management and planning of different levels and territorial configurations. This suggests that regional development can be perceived as a system in which there are strong sectoral links that create a condition for its functionality. In this regard, overcoming the significant territorial imbalances in the districts of Shumen and Sliven will be achieved by improving transport and communication connectivity, which will facilitate access to public services of a higher degree, and by stimulating the development of city centers from different hierarchical levels. Here it is important to complete the Hemus Motorway, the Black Sea Motorway, the I-2 Ruse-Shumen expressway, the Silistra-Shumen-Karnobat-Yambol-Lesovo border checkpoint with the branches for the town of Sliven. Also looking for opportunities for the sub-Balkan at least in the section Sopot-Karlovo-Kazanlak-Nova Zagora-Sliven-Karnobat-Aytos - Sunny Beach to be doubled with dimensions of 4

lanes. Also in the two districts of Shumen and Sliven, work must be done to improve digital connectivity with high-speed networks, which are crucial for the transition to digital technologies in the economy. The two districts have adjacent mountain areas, which means that priorities and strategic goals need to be defined for them, in order to reduce the emerging striking regional differences. It is necessary to improve the education of young people, strengthen the role of the University of Shumen, as well as the branch of the Technical University in Sliven. The strength of the Bulgarian regions must come from their experience of change by finding their socio-economic profile and development of those industries that bring them added value and prosperity. In practice, regional development is designed to characterize the scheme or model of development of the country as a whole. This presupposes a significant level of decentralization and commitment of the management system with the possible resources for the implementation of the respective measures and policies. To a large extent, the management of regional development requires the setting of priorities for each individual territorial community. It is necessary to look for the specifics and peculiarities of each autonomous space for the realization of the potential and the comparative advantages of the separate settlements. The two districts of Shumen and Sliven with their economic potential are a clear example of how in the recent past how their economic potential allows them to actively participate in national and international markets. The potential of the two districts of Shumen and Sliven remains, but it must be brought out through strong regional development in line with the development of human capital and support for regional business.

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