Public Opinion Poll: Vidin
September-October 2023
Methodology

• The survey was conducted on behalf of the International Republican Institute’s Center for Insights in Survey Research by ESTAT.

• Data was collected between September 21 and 8 October, 2023, through CAPI administered face-to-face interviews in respondents’ homes.

• The sample consisted of n=300 adults, who are 18 years or older, residents of the municipality of Vidin, Bulgaria, and have voting rights. The sample excluded residents detained in custody or currently in prison.

• A multi-stage probability sampling method was used to design a municipally representative sample. The sample was stratified by urban/rural residency, followed by random selection of primary sampling units (PSUs) within each stratum. Households were selected by random walk in each of the 30 PSUs, and respondents were selected by the last birthday method. The sampling frame was based on the 2021 Population and Housing census.

• The achieved sample was weighted for gender, age group, and type of settlement.

• The response rate was 44 percent.

• The margin of error for the mid-range of the full sample does not exceed ±5.7 points.

• Charts and graphs may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding. Cited bases are weighted.
In general, would you say that Vidin municipality is heading in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- 57% In the right direction
- 40% In the wrong direction
- 3% Don't know/Refused
What is the most important problem facing Vidin municipality today? And what is the second most important problem facing Vidin municipality today?

(Up to two responses accepted; spontaneous response; top 15 responses displayed)
How would you describe the current economic situation of your household?

- Very good: 64%
- Somewhat good: 30%
- Somewhat bad: 1%
- Very bad: 4%
- Don’t know/Refused: <1%
How would you describe the current economic situation of your household?

To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you?

*Respondents were asked the following question: To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you? Negative is the sum of responses for It has had a lot of negative impact and It has had some negative impact. Not negative is the sum of responses for It has had little negative impact and It has not had any negative impact.
How likely or unlikely are ordinary people able to influence decisions made by your mayor and municipal administration?
How likely or unlikely are ordinary people able to influence decisions made by your municipal council?
To what extent do civil society organizations (CSOs) impact municipal administration policy in Vidin municipality? A CSO is a local, national or international group of people who organize to support a particular interest, group or issue.
To what extent do CSOs impact municipal council policy in Vidin municipality?

- Very impactful: 35%
- Somewhat impactful: 44%
- Somewhat unimpactful: 16%
- Very unimpactful: 4%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
For the following issues, is the municipal government doing a very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Somewhat good</th>
<th>Somewhat bad</th>
<th>Very bad</th>
<th>Don't know/Refused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing education</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting crime</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing healthcare</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting corruption</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging citizens in decision-making</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining infrastructure like roads and public buildings</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting EU funds</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating jobs</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting private investments</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How would you rate the performance of the municipal administration in communicating with the public about the decisions they take?
How would you rate the performance of the municipal council in communicating with the public about the decisions they take?

- **53%**: Somewhat good
- **33%**: Somewhat bad
- **11%**: Very good
- **3%**: <1%
- **3%**: Very bad
- **3%**: Don’t know/Refused
Did you vote in the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections?

- Yes: 61%
- No: 38%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
For which party did you vote in the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections?

(Among respondents from Vidin who voted in the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections, n=182; spontaneous response)

- Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria - Union of Democratic Forces (GERB-UDF): 31%
- Bulgarian Socialist Party: 10%
- We Continue the Change - Democratic Bulgaria: 9%
- Revival: 4%
- There is Such a People: 4%
- The Movement for Rights and Freedoms: 1%
- Spoiled ballot: 7%
- Other: <1%
- Don't know/Refused: 33%
How do you view the recent change in national government as a result of the April 2, 2023 parliamentary elections?
Do you believe that corruption in Vidin municipality is a serious problem or not?

Prior to asking this question, the following introduction was read to the respondent “I will now ask you a series of questions about corruption. When I say corruption, I mean abusing public office for personal gain, like when a government official solicits bribes or awards a contract in exchange for political support or money.”
On which source do you base your assessment of the level of corruption in Vidin municipality?

(Up to two responses accepted)

- Talk with friends and people around: 23% (First), 34% (Second)
- Talk with relatives or family: 32% (First), 19% (Second)
- Information provided by the media, such as TV, radio, newspaper, internet, Facebook etc.: 13% (First), 15% (Second)
- Information about corruption given by civil society organizations: 6% (First), 13% (Second)
- Personal experience, meaning you have had to provide cash, gifts, or favors: 14% (First), 5% (Second)
- Government reports: 4% (First), 7% (Second)
- Reports of politicians: 3% (First), 6% (Second)
- Don't know/Refused: 5%
In your experience, what type of corruption is most common in Vidin municipality?

- Acting in self-interest instead of in the interest of citizens: 30%
- Making decisions based on connections as opposed to merit: 16%
- Extortion: 16%
- Soliciting bribes or gifts: 12%
- Stealing or deliberately mismanaging funds: 11%
- Failure to investigate or prosecute wrongdoing: 8%
- Awarding contracts to friends, family, or political supporters: 3%
- None of these exist in our municipality: 1%
- Don't know: 3%
Do you believe that corruption in our country is a serious problem or not?

- Very serious: 60%
- Somewhat serious: 13%
- Somewhat not serious: 2%
- Not at all serious: 1%
- Don't know/Refused: 2%
In your experience, what type of corruption is most common in our country?

- Acting in self-interest instead of interest of citizens: 32%
- Stealing or deliberately mismanaging funds: 19%
- Failure to investigate or prosecute wrongdoing: 17%
- Making decisions based on connections as opposed to merit: 15%
- Soliciting bribes or gifts: 12%
- Extortion: 2%
- None of these exist in our country: 1%
- Don’t know/Refused: 2%
Over the past 12 months, has corruption among each of the following levels of government increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

- **Municipal authorities**
  - Increased: 13%
  - Stayed the same: 52%
  - Decreased: 27%
  - Don't know/Refused: 8%

- **National authorities**
  - Increased: 18%
  - Stayed the same: 50%
  - Decreased: 24%
  - Don't know/Refused: 7%
To what extent do you think corruption can be reduced in Vidin municipality?

- Corruption can be completely eradicated: 5%
- Corruption can be substantially reduced: 4%
- Corruption can be reduced to a certain degree: 19%
- Corruption cannot be reduced at all: 22%
- Don't know/Refused: 50%
Please tell me if there is a lot, some, little, or no corruption among each of the following providers of government services in Vidin municipality.

- Courts: 15% A lot, 21% Some, 48% Little, 7% No, 8% Don't know/Refused
- Police: 12% A lot, 24% Some, 46% Little, 9% No, 9% Don't know/Refused
- Traffic police: 13% A lot, 22% Some, 46% Little, 10% No, 8% Don't know/Refused
- State inspection and control bodies: 15% A lot, 19% Some, 43% Little, 14% No, 10% Don't know/Refused
- Public medical establishments: 8% A lot, 22% Some, 45% Little, 18% No, 7% Don't know/Refused
- Municipal tax-collecting offices: 5% A lot, 17% Some, 44% Little, 23% No, 10% Don't know/Refused
- Municipal record-keeping and licensing offices: 7% A lot, 15% Some, 42% Little, 21% No, 15% Don't know/Refused
- Public education establishments: 5% A lot, 15% Some, 43% Little, 25% No, 11% Don't know/Refused
At which level of government is corruption most prevalent?

- Municipal authorities: 8%
- National authorities: 79%
- There is no corruption: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: 10%
Who among **municipal authorities** is most corrupt, if any?

(Among respondents who think that corruption is most prevalent among national or municipal authorities from Vidin, n=262; spontaneous response)
Who among national authorities is most corrupt, if any?

(Among respondents who think that corruption is most prevalent among national or municipal authorities from Vidin, n=262; spontaneous response)

- Political parties and party leadership: 27%
- The prime minister and his cabinet: 20%
- Business leaders or oligarchs: 16%
- The judicial branch: 13%
- Parliament: 12%
- The president: <1%
- Other: 5%
- Don’t know/Refused: 6%
To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you?

- 36%: It has had a lot of negative impact
- 25%: It has had some negative impact
- 24%: It has had little negative impact
- 12%: It has not had any negative impact
- 3%: Don't know/Refused
To what extent, if any, has corruption had a negative impact on you?

**Among those who declared that corruption had a negative impact on them, n=111**

In general, would you say that Vidin municipality is heading in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- In the right direction: 43%
- In the wrong direction: 53%
- Don't know/Refused: 4%

**Among those who declared that corruption had little/no negative impact on them, n=180**

In general, would you say that Vidin municipality is heading in the right direction or in the wrong direction?

- In the right direction: 65%
- In the wrong direction: 33%
- Don't know/Refused: 2%

*Good is the total of very good and somewhat good. Bad is the total of somewhat bad and very bad.*
In the past two years, how often, if at all, have you witnessed or experienced corruption?

- Daily: 2%
- Weekly: 4%
- Monthly: 7%
- Less frequently: 45%
- Not at all: 38%
- Don’t know/Refused: 3%
In which context did you witness or experience corruption. Did you experience or witness corruption....?

(Among respondents who have witnessed corruption, n=175; only “Yes” responses displayed)
In your dealings with the municipal government, how important are personal contacts and relationships to get things done?

- Very important: 27%
- Somewhat important: 11%
- Somewhat unimportant: 7%
- Very unimportant: 1%
- Don't know/Refused: 54%
Are you aware of any anti-corruption initiatives by any of the following levels of government?

- **Municipal authorities**
  - Yes: 17%
  - No: 77%
  - Don't know/Refused: 6%

- **National authorities**
  - Yes: 16%
  - No: 78%
  - Don't know/Refused: 6%
How effective or ineffective is each of the following levels of government in addressing corruption?

Municipal authorities:
- Very effective: 3%
- Somewhat effective: 40%
- Somewhat ineffective: 42%
- Very ineffective: 9%
- Don't know/Refused: 7%

National authorities:
- Very effective: 5%
- Somewhat effective: 36%
- Somewhat ineffective: 44%
- Very ineffective: 10%
- Don't know/Refused: 6%
Based on your experience, please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each statement… The _______ has a sincere desire and will to combat corruption in our country

- **The mayor**: 8% Strongly agree, 38% Somewhat agree, 39% Somewhat disagree, 13% Strongly disagree, 2% Don't know/Refused
- **The president of Bulgaria**: 9% Strongly agree, 34% Somewhat agree, 40% Somewhat disagree, 14% Strongly disagree, 3% Don't know/Refused
- **The municipal council**: 7% Strongly agree, 34% Somewhat agree, 41% Somewhat disagree, 17% Strongly disagree, 2% Don't know/Refused
- **The prime minister of Bulgaria**: 7% Strongly agree, 32% Somewhat agree, 39% Somewhat disagree, 20% Strongly disagree, 2% Don't know/Refused
- **The parliament of Bulgaria**: 7% Strongly agree, 31% Somewhat agree, 40% Somewhat disagree, 21% Strongly disagree, 1% Don't know/Refused
- **The judiciary of Bulgaria**: 6% Strongly agree, 31% Somewhat agree, 40% Somewhat disagree, 21% Strongly disagree, 1% Don't know/Refused
Which among the following groups is the most important and the second most important to effectively address corruption in Vidin municipality?

(Up to two responses accepted)

- Municipal political leadership: 21% first most important, 28% second most important
- National political leadership: 31% first most important, 18% second most important
- Citizens: 14% first most important, 9% second most important
- Public sector employees: 7% first most important, 9% second most important
- Private sector: 11% first most important, 5% second most important
- National media: 2% first most important, 4% second most important
- Domestic NGOs or CSOs: 2% first most important, 3% second most important
- International NGOs or CSOs: 2% first most important, 2% second most important
- Local media: 1% first most important, 2% second most important
- Other: <1% first most important
- No (other) group can effectively address corruption: 4% first most important, 8% second most important
- Don’t know/Refused: 4% first most important
To what degree, if at all, is it the responsibility of citizens to address corruption?

- 48% To a very large degree
- 22% To a somewhat large degree
- 18% To a somewhat small degree
- 9% To a very small degree
- 3% Don't know/Refused
Do you know where to report a corrupt act of a municipal official?

- Yes: 52%
- No: 46%
- Don’t know/Refused: 2%
What channels would you contact to report a corrupt act?

(Among respondents who know where to report a corrupt act, n=157; spontaneous response; multiple responses accepted)

- The police: 55%
- The national anticorruption commission: 14%
- The anticorruption committee within the municipal council: 13%
- A national media outlet: 12%
- The municipal administration via hotline/form for corruption report/written letter: 5%
- The regional attorney: 3%
- A specific local news/media outlet: 2%
- A civil society organization: 2%
- The national ombudsman: 1%
- Don’t Know/Refused: 0%
During the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household reported a corrupt act by a municipal official?
(Among respondents who know where to report a corrupt act, n=157)
Some people are unwilling to report corrupt actions because of various reasons. Please tell me which of the following you personally consider as the primary reason for not reporting corruption to the relevant authorities.

- No action will be taken even if corruption is reported: 46%
- Those who report corruption will be subject to retribution/revenge: 15%
- Lack of evidence to prove: 13%
- Most people who indulge in corruption only do so because of economic hardship: 10%
- It's not worth reporting corruption if I am not personally hurt by it: 5%
- Do not know the relevant institution responsible for corruption cases: 4%
- Lack of clarity about corruption proceedings: 2%
- Our society does not reward those who report corruption: 2%
- There is no mechanism to report corruption anonymously: 2%
- Don't know/Refused: 2%
What do you think is the primary factor causing corruption in public institutions?

- Need for money to make a living: 26%
- Weak rule of law: 24%
- Weak ethics or morals: 16%
- Culture of impunity: 15%
- Institutional leadership is corrupt: 5%
- Corruption is an accepted part of life: 4%
- Lack of transparency: 3%
- Politicians and power holders interfere in the work of institutions: 2%
- Internal controls are weak: 2%
- Long or unclear procedures for services: 1%
- No effective external oversight: 1%
- One-party control of government: <1%
- Other: <1%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%

Vidin
Which of the terms I will show you best reflects how a corrupt person is perceived in our society?

- Venal: 36%
- Guilty: 22%
- Powerful: 21%
- Clever or smart: 8%
- Resourceful: 4%
- Poor: 3%
- Selfish or self-centered: 2%
- Other: 3%
- Don't Know/Refused: 10%

*Responses receiving <1% are collapsed into Other*
How transparent or nontransparent is the work of the mayor and the municipal administration?

- Very transparent: 48%
- Somewhat transparent: 4%
- Somewhat nontransparent: 3%
- Very nontransparent: 2%
- Don't know/Refused: 4%
Do you find the information you need from the municipal administration easily or not?

- 46% Very easily
- 33% Somewhat easily
- 8% Somewhat difficultly
- 6% Very difficultly
- 1% I don’t need information from the municipal administration
- 6% Don’t know/Refused
Are you aware of when municipal government public discussion meetings take place?

- Yes: 90%
- No: 9%
- Don't know/Refused: 2%
Have you ever attended a municipal government public discussion meeting?

- Yes: 94%
- No: 5%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
How transparent or nontransparent is the work of the municipal council?

- **Very transparent**: 45%
- **Somewhat transparent**: 5%
- **Somewhat nontransparent**: 4%
- **Very nontransparent**: 1%
- **Don't know/Refused**: 4%
Are you aware of when municipal council meetings take place?

- Yes: 92%
- No: 5%
- Don't know/Refused: 3%
Have you attended any municipal council meetings?

- Yes: 97%
- No: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
How closely do you follow the decisions and actions taken by each of the following institutions?

- **The mayor**
  - Very closely: 1%
  - Somewhat closely: 51%
  - A little: 32%
  - Not at all: 16%
  - Don't know/Refused: <1%

- **The municipal council**
  - Very closely: 1%
  - Somewhat closely: 46%
  - A little: 34%
  - Not at all: 19%
  - Don't know/Refused: <1%

- **The municipal administration**
  - Very closely: 1%
  - Somewhat closely: 46%
  - A little: 34%
  - Not at all: 19%
  - Don't know/Refused: <1%
Is it easy or difficult to communicate with the following entities in Vidin municipality?

The municipal administration
- Very easy: 6%
- Somewhat easy: 40%
- Somewhat difficult: 32%
- Very difficult: 6%
- I have never made an attempt: 13%
- Don't know/Refused: 3%

The municipal council
- Very easy: 4%
- Somewhat easy: 31%
- Somewhat difficult: 34%
- Very difficult: 6%
- I have never made an attempt: 20%
- Don't know/Refused: 4%
What are the primary sources you use to learn about the decisions and actions taken by the municipal administration and the council?
(Spontaneous response; multiple responses accepted)

- Social media (such as Facebook): 55%
- Local media outlets: 23%
- Friends or family: 16%
- The municipal website: 15%
- National media: 5%
- I do not learn about decisions and actions taken by my municipal government: 3%
- Don't know/Refused: <1%
Which of the following is your preferred channel of communication with the municipal administration and the council?

- Social media (such as Facebook etc.): 33%
- An online platform provided or endorsed by the municipality: 11%
- Official e-mail exchange: 9%
- Meeting with a member of the administration: 8%
- Meeting with the mayor: 5%
- Official letters: 4%
- Statement during a session of the council or a council working group: 3%
- Meeting with a municipal councilor: 2%
- Other: 2%
- I have never attempted to communicate with the municipal administration or the municipal council: 22%
- Don't know/Refused: 2%
To what extent are each of your municipal government entities influenced by wealthy people?

- The mayor: 27% Very much, 42% Somewhat, 19% A little, 2% Not at all, 9% Don't know/Refused
- The municipal administration: 25% Very much, 41% Somewhat, 21% A little, 4% Not at all, 9% Don't know/Refused
- The municipal council: 26% Very much, 45% Somewhat, 17% A little, 3% Not at all, 9% Don't know/Refused
Are you aware of any local CSOs, which means a local group that forms around a common goal and is not associated with the government, that work for more transparency in the municipal administration and the council?

- Yes: 80%
- No: 18%
- Don't know/Refused: 1%
Do you think that the transparency of the municipal administration has improved or worsened, or stayed the same over the last 10 years?
Do you think that the transparency of the municipal council has improved or worsened, or stayed the same over the last 10 years?

- Improved: 51%
- Stayed the same: 31%
- Worsened: 13%
- Don't know/Refused: 5%
Do you see political will for improvement of transparency in the municipal administration?
Do you see political will for improvement of transparency in the municipal council?

- 41% Yes
- 53% No
- 6% Don't know/Refused
Which of the following do you think is the most important factor for getting a job in the municipal administration?

- Being a member of the political party in power in the municipality: 32%
- Education and experience: 31%
- Having a family member or friend in municipal government: 26%
- Paying a bribe: 2%
- Other: 1%
- Don't know/Refused: 7%
Are you satisfied with the level of digital services offered by Vidin municipality?

- Yes: 23%
- No: 21%
- I have no need for digital services: 52%
- Don't know/Refused: 4%
Do you think efforts are made to improve the digital services offered by Vidin municipality?

(Among all respondents except for those who stated they have no need for digital services from Vidin, n=143)
How interested or uninterested are you in political news and information about Vidin municipality?

- Very interested: 7%
- Somewhat interested: 1%
- Somewhat uninterested: 5%
- Very uninterested: 37%
- Don't know/Refused: 50%
Are the media in Vidin municipality free to independently cover any issue or not?

- Very free: 27%
- Somewhat free: 25%
- Somewhat not free: 4%
- Very not free: 4%
- Don't know/Refused: 40%
Which media platform do you use most frequently and second most frequently to gain political news and information about Vidin municipality?
(Up to two responses accepted)

- **Social Media, such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok etc.**
  - Most frequently used: 39%
  - Second most frequently used: 18%
  - Total: 57%

- **Television**
  - Most frequently used: 25%
  - Second most frequently used: 29%
  - Total: 54%

- **Internet, other than social media**
  - Most frequently used: 22%
  - Second most frequently used: 30%
  - Total: 55%

- **Radio**
  - Most frequently used: 10%
  - Second most frequently used: 13%
  - Total: 23%

- **Print Media**
  - Most frequently used: 3%
  - Second most frequently used: 6%
  - Total: 9%

- **None or no other**
  - Most frequently used: 1%
  - Second most frequently used: 2%
  - Total: 3%

- **Don't know/Refused**
  - Most frequently used: 1%
  - Second most frequently used: 0%
  - Total: 1%

Colors indicate the most frequently used (black) and second most frequently used (gray) media platforms.
Do you perceive local media as critical or not critical of the municipal administration and the council?

- 42% Very critical
- 32% Somewhat critical
- 5% Somewhat not critical
- 5% Very not critical
- 5% Don’t know/Refused
## Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Urbanicity</th>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>How does your household financial situation compare to the average household in Vidin municipality?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>Complete primary school or no formal education</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Complete lower secondary school</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 18-35</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>Complete upper secondary school</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 36-55</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Complete higher education</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age 56+</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Don't know/Refused</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
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