

Stable development in Bulgarian regions—politics and realities

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Abstract Global and regional issues in modern society require new approach for finding solution in regards with activities and responsibilities on national and regional level. Necessary are balance in priorities and interests on global scale. Since 80s in 20th century, an objective result from this necessity is the concept for stable development. Object of the current work are policy and realities in regional stable development in Bulgaria since the end of the Transition and after Bulgaria's joining to the European Union. Outlined are the general causes and possible solutions for stable development in a well-developed country in social and economic aspect, representative for Bulgarian conditions—the region of Stara Zagora, for the period 2000–2006.

Keywords Globalization · Stable development · Region · Regional development · Regional policy

1 Introduction

Regional development in the beginning of the 21st century depends on the processes determining a trend of inter-commitment and globalization in social, economical, and political aspect (Olbrow 2001). Global and regional issues in modern society require new approach for finding solution with activities and responsibilities on national and regional level. Necessary are balance in priorities and interests on a global scale. Since 80s in 20th century, the concept for stable development has received an objective result (Vasileva 2007). In 1992, a conference organized by UN took place in Rio de Janeiro. Global environment problems and problems of future

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human development were discussed, analyzed, and assessed. The main conclusion which representatives from 179 countries made was to set up prerequisites for stable development on Earth. The Agenda 21 was approved. It defined the way to a stable development in economical, ecological, and social aspect. Governments were advised to approve national strategies for stable development. Studying one system's stability is necessary to define the elements which form it and the factors which establish and disturb stability, and to determine stability and its assessment criteria.

The basic dimensions of stable development are three closely connected equal elements: economic, social, and ecologic ones. It is not possible to solve the stable development problem without regional and national goals and strategies for its realization (Ivanov 1999).

The program for more active integration to the EU regions, approved by the 12th session of SEMAT, Hanover in September 2000, lays down the basic principles for stable territorial development in Europe. It recommends balance in social and economical development, decrease in encroachment upon environment, preservation of nature resources and natural heritage, valorization of cultural heritage, development of quality tourism, and prevention and limitation of after disaster effects. These actualities are addressed to each municipality or region. There are municipalities and regions in Bulgaria according to the territorial division (Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, art. 135, p. 1). The law for regional development in Bulgaria, carried out by the 38th Parliament on 11th March, 1999 (*State newspaper*, issue 14 dated 20th Feb. 2004), determines political aims for regional development. In particular regions, stable and balanced development is necessary also for development establishment in employment and incomes (art. 2) and concentration of resources in order to achieve regional development goals and unitary planning approach (art. 5). Stable development is a process where essential in taking decisions are order, priorities, and effectiveness. A key for effective management is to eliminate accordingly disproportions and controversies in the territorial organization of society, production, and people's life (Dimitrova 2008).

Object of the current study are policy and realities in regional stable development during the end of the Transition and after Bulgaria's entering to the EU. Outlined are the general causes and possible solutions for stable development in a well-developed country in social and economical aspect, also representative for Bulgarian conditions—Stara Zagora, for the period 2000–2006.

The city of Stara Zagora is an administrative center of the municipality and region named after it. We adopt 'region' as a term better describing various geographical, natural, and economic features of the region. Its significance as a term is that it includes different types of villages, belonging in administrative aspect to municipalities unitary within the region of Stara Zagora.

2 Regional politics for stable development in Bulgaria

Bulgarian regional policy is directed towards decrease in economic and social differentiation within the country and its regions. The general object of the policy is to create opportunities for stable and balanced development in regional economics. Of first significance is working out a national Plan for regional development as part

of the national plan for economic development which should establish conditions for regional policy goals achievement. The leading principles of this policy are: restricted state interference in market mechanism; concentration and priority; integral and complex approach; commitment and complement; integration of branch policies, planning, decentralization, partnership, competition, and well-provided information.

The national Plan for regional development is a basic planning instrument for conducting regional development policy. It contains principles, aims, and priorities for the state's regional development. It defines the regions for purposive impact: regions for growth; regions for development; regions for international collaboration and development; regions with specific problems and priorities; the tools for regional development goals achievement; and particular projects and initiatives for this growth. Regional level of planning is one important step in the decentralization process of planning, programming, and managing the regional development. Since 2000, six regions for planning have been established in Bulgaria: North-West with the city of Vidin as center, North central with the city of Rousse as center, North-West with the city of Varna as center, South-East with the city of Bourgas as center; South Central with the city of Plovdiv as center (Stara Zagora belongs to this region), and South-West with the city of Sofia as center. In each region is appointed an advisory committee for economic and social rapprochement. This is a state and social advisory agency for conducting policy of economic and social rapprochement in accordance with particular regional priorities for planning set in the national plan for economic development (Vasileva 2007).

3 Priorities in regional development management

Priorities are aimed to find solutions of general issues concerning stable development in regions. Skills are significant for the experts working in territorial agencies. Priority areas are the following:

Resolution of the issue—‘center—periphery’; elimination of infrastructural deficit in ‘periphery’, stimulation in economic growth, incomes increase, unemployment restriction, and consistent consolidation in decentralization and regional government agencies.

- Establishing conditions for stable and balanced growth in particular regions by working out territorial strategies and plans.
- Improvement in coordination between state policies and integration on different levels.
- Improvement in information resources and maintenance of up-to-date territorial info systems.
- Restriction in employment divergence, people's incomes, living standard, infrastructure, and social services.
- Improvement in territorial accessibility, living conditions, and ecology.
- Encouraging business and mitigating social issues by: supporting establishment and activities of small and medium-sized enterprises, ensuring entrepreneur and innovative environment, participating in projects in the sphere of employment, and production enterprises restructuring.

- Opening on national and regional level; international cooperation when dealing with regional and local growth problems; free access to local markets; support of the trend for free movement of people, goods, capitals, and services
- Improvement in infrastructure (for better business growth), labor efficiency, and living conditions.

4 District (regional) plans for regional development—essence and real dimensions (based on the model in Stara Zagora)

The regional/district plans for regional development are in conformity with the legal regulation for regional development and its abbreviation—national plan—regional development (NPRD). It supposes mentioning right and contrary connections between both basic planning documents—national plan and district plans—regional development (DPRD). This is the base on which the essential area and leading requirements for the establishment and application the DPRD are laid.

The current Constitution of Republic of Bulgaria (1991) clearly regulates the requirement—the state shall establish conditions conducive to the balanced development of the different regions of the country, and shall assist the territorial bodies and activities through its fiscal, credit and investment policies (art. 20 CRB¹). In general, the region shall be an administrative territorial unit for the conduct of a regional policy, the implementation of state governance on a local level, and the ensuring the concurrences of national and local interests (art. 142 CRB).

A Bulgarian act of regional government ([State newspaper](#), issue 26 since 1999) is the supreme act settling regional politics in the Republic of Bulgaria. It regulates the work of governing bodies and the basic strategies for regional development—the national and regional plans, their contents, and terms of work; different types of regions for purposive impact and planning; recourses and financial instruments for regional development.

Working, conducting, and monitoring the NPRD is a task delegated to the Minister of Regional Development and Public works. National plan is approved by the Council of Ministers after harmonization with its Council for Regional Development. Working out the regional plans is a task delegated to regional governors who are assisted in their work by Regional Development Councils in accordance with Bulgarian acts of regional government. Regional plans include specific goals, priorities, instruments and initiatives in conformity with National plan for the territories in regions as well as investment projects in accordance with specific goals and priorities (even municipal). According to the legal framework, national and regional plans take part in the procedure of planning the state budget. Plans of the planned regions are interpreted as a combination of regional plans. Therefore, they should be corresponding to the requirements and terms of regional plans. The regional Plan for regional development is discussed with the Regional Council. Then it is introduced to the Minister of Regional Development and Public works and for next approval by the Council of Ministers. Interpretation of legal texts

¹ CRB—The Constitution of Republic of Bulgaria.

regarding regional Plan for regional development describes it as a unit specific for the particular region goals, principles, and priorities on national level: a composition of articulated projects, measurements, possible instruments, and programs for indicative resource distribution.

Defining the essence in cooperation between NPRD and RPRD for the region of Stara Zagora is necessary to formulate according to the legislation and the technology for national plan establishment.

There are three basic procedures:

- Clarification and approval of the general dimensions of national plan—regional development, including also criteria for choosing regions for impact and their areas.
- Establishment procedures for regional plans
- Summarizing and working out the national plan

Regional development policy coordinates also branch politics and lower-rate regional plans. In addition, with their establishment, these plans reflect branch strategies without duplication and direct them according to the specific priorities and areas. The regional plan—regional development itself is not only connected with national plan in horizontal and vertical aspect but it is also in a complicate relationship with NPRD especially in:

- aims succession and priority comparison on national and regional level
- objects and contents of both plans in regards with the unit and the similarity in their problems
- technical procedures and steps for development, approval, and implementation
- info compatibility and security of these plans
- financial mechanisms and instruments necessary for realization and also in aspect of implemented forms and methods for indicative resource distribution
- forms and control methods, techniques, and technology for observation and monitoring (region of Stara Zagora, Plan for regional development—2000–2006)

The nature of the object for planning—the region of Stara Zagora, along with the complicated economical, social, ecological, and territorial processes demands purposive program and system approach when updating the plan. This is because of the complicated nature of these processes—unpredictable and dynamic. They are in force in the region, apart from the national territory. We assume that the territory of the region of Stara Zagora is an ‘open system’ that interacts with adjacent regions within the area of South central region, the country, and neighbor countries within the international cooperation.

According to the general characteristics of country regions (area, population, natural resources, economic potential, infrastructure, etc.), the region of Stara Zagora belongs to the group of 8,019 regions with the best opportunities for future development. This is also verified by the analysis and assessment by special criteria, used for comparison between regions.

The current status of the region of Stara Zagora (territorial, demographic, economical, infrastructural, social, ecologic, etc.) is a result of a continuous historic development, various processes and politics for area utilization, human resources, economic and infrastructural potentials, etc. The area within the region of Stara

Zagora is an object of purposive national and regional policy. It is opened towards adjacent regional units. It also develops as a part of the national social, economic, and structural complex. This is valid for the regional policy that has been implemented in the region since 1999.

The region of Stara Zagora is assessed by the following summarized indicators:²

Indicators	Measure	Bulgaria	Region of Stara Zagora	Relative percentage
Size of area	km ²	110,975.16	5,146.86	4.64
Population in 1998	People	8,230,367	385,963	4.70
Urban population	People	5,609,931	265,468	68.78
Rural population	People	262,043	120,495	31.22
Number of villages	Pcs	5,340	205	3.75
Cities/towns	Pcs	240	10	4.17
Villages	Pcs	5,100	195	3.82
Road network	km	36,730	1,747.1	4.76
Highways	km	318.8		
1st class roads	km	2,886.6	191.3	6.63
Number of schools of general education	Pcs	3,137	128	4.08
Number of professional schools	Pcs	545	17	3.12
Number of health centers	Pcs	4,925		
Number of beds in hospitals	Pcs	49,120	2,362	4.81
Incomes from activities	Thousand levs. per capita	4,376.21	5,833.7	

The general indicators above and other indicators give option to analyze and assess the position of Stara Zagora region within the national area. The specified goals and priorities of the regional plan are the following:

(a) Priority in regards with regional location

The location of the region of Stara Zagora has several advantages which could be used as a factor with stimulating impact over its development. The advantages result from:

The significant roads, railways, and communication ways, a part of the national transport infrastructure, which cross the region. The region is crossed by main optic cables, gas-main ways, and other.

The optimal location of Stara Zagora region in transport aspect is assessed also in view of future potentials for development. They are considered in the context of European transport corridors that are expected to be built throughout the Bulgarian territory. Euro corridors No. 8 and No. 9 are crossing their ways in the region of Stara Zagora. The future highway 'Maritza', part of euro corridor No. 4, is also crossing the region area. After building, they would have an impact on adjacent territories and would stimulate positive processes in urban/rural, economic, and social development in the region as a whole and in particular villages.

(b) Territorial resources provision

The assessments of territorial resources provision are based on the following:

- the area of 5,146.86 km² or 4.6% of the state area ranks the region among the first five largest regions—Bourgas, Sofia, Blagoevgrad, Plovdiv, and Haskovo.

² Region of Stara Zagora, plan for regional development in the period 2000–2006

- Territorial resources with great importance are the valuable agricultural lands. They take 45.2% from the region's area (at an average of 43.3% for the country). The valuable agricultural lands are located in the Southern part of the Gornotrakiiska lowland (Stara Zagora and Chirpan fields) and Kazanlak valley. Regardless of this, the region of Stara Zagora is in less favorable position compared with neighbor regions.
- Valuable resource with regional (as well as national) significance are the brown coal fields in South Maritza coal basin. Their exploitation is one of the main regional priorities in current and future economic development of the region. With this resource, the region of Stara Zagora becomes a leading region in the country and this makes it the second power center in the country (after AEC Kozlodui).
- The forest and water resources (including also thermo mineral waters) in the region are below on the average resources for the country. In regards with them, any priorities and goals for future regional development cannot be formulated. These resources have an impact on development in particular municipalities within the region—Pavel Bania, Kazanlak, and others.

(c) Provision for human resources

The region of Stara Zagora is one of the densely inhabited regional units in the country.

- According to the quantitative indicators of human recourse, 4.7% of the state population is concentrated in the region. The population ranks the region in 5th place among the largest regions—Sofia, Plovdiv, Rouse, and Varna
- The qualitative indicators of human resources in the region of Stara Zagora show serious demographic problems. One with foremost significance is the growing old population (regardless of the fact that the region is not seriously damaged in this aspect). The educational level of the population is equal to the average level for the country.

(d) Economic basis—development and function

The region of Stara Zagora, like the balance of regional units, has created its economic basis in accordance with priorities and strategic directions for development under the conditions of planned and centralized economy. Since the end of the 1980s, economic development in the region has been realized by building big capacities (powers) in the sphere of:

- Power engineering, power production, and export
- Special machinery construction (munitions factory, electronics, hydraulics, robot engineering)
- Chemical industry

Agriculture is always on a state of subordination in comparison with industry.

Nowadays, undoubtedly in the economic characteristic of Stara Zagora, power production and transference are coming up as a perspective. They are concentrated in the power complex 'Maritza East', located in the municipalities of Radnevo and Galabovo.

Leading place in processing industry takes machinery construction, food and tobacco industry, chemical industry, etc. The larger commercial companies which exist in the current economic environment are successors of the former giants in the sphere of electronics, robot engineering, food and tobacco machinery construction, special production, one of four fertilizer factories in the country, textile companies, etc. The current economic, production, and technology characteristics are different compared to the ones a decade ago. Private capitals have predominance in these companies and some changes have been made in production capacities.

The indicators for comparison and assessment the economic potential in the region of Stara Zagora and its position in the national economic complex are:

- The indicator ‘incomes from activities’ (thousand leva per capita) compares the region with other regions. It shows the region of Stara Zagora in a favorable position. The average indicator for the country is 4,376.2 leva per capita and for the region of Stara Zagora it is 5,833.7 leva per capita. The indicator has higher values only for the region of Sofia (10,354.0 leva per capita), Bourgas (9,018.4 leva per capita), and Varna (6,648.6 leva per capita)
- The structure of incomes from activities in the region of Stara Zagora does not distinguish considerably from the state structure and the balance of regional administrative units. More than half of the revenues (52.2%) come from secondary industry and building, 43.9% come from the tertiary sector including services as a whole, and 3.9% come from the primary sector (agriculture and forestry enterprises)

(e) Labor market status

Labor market status is characterized mainly by the indicators ‘employment level’ and ‘unemployment level’.

According to the indicator ‘employment’, the region of Stara Zagora (305.1 employed people per 1,000 persons) is in a better position compared with the average employment level for the country (247.7 people). Here, the region of Stara Zagora takes 2nd place after the region of Sofia (332.0 employed people)

The unemployment level in the region is relatively low—12.4% in 1999 on the average level for the country—16.6%. According to this indicator, the region is in less favorable position compared with the regions of Sofia, Gabrovo, Varna, Bourgas, and Plovdiv.

(f) Infrastructure

Infrastructure is analyzed and assessed in complexity by a research in technical status (transport, power, communication, water-supply equipment) and social infrastructure (educational, healthy, sport, cultural, institutional, etc.)

- In regards with the relative indicator ‘density of road network (km/km^2)’ the region of Stara Zagora (0.339) has values close on the average for the country (0.330). It takes 13th place among others.
- In regards with the indicator ‘phone subscribers per 1,000 people’ the situation in communication infrastructure is equal to the one in transport infrastructure. Also, 394 subscribers per 1,000 people are close on the average for the country (385). It ranks the region on 9th place compared with the other regions.

- The indicator ‘beds in hospitals per 1,000 people’ gives idea about the development level in the network of health and sanatorium centers. There are 6.1 beds per 1,000 people in the region of Stara Zagora compared with the average 5.93 for the country. Twelve other regions have better equipment in the hospitals.

(g) Ecological characteristics

Ecological problems and activities for environment protection are in a direct relation with opportunities for stable regional development. Hot spots in ecological aspect, with national and regional dimensions, in the region of Stara Zagora are:

- The Maritza East complex (coal output and power supply) is a source of transregional air pollution. The re-cultivation of agricultural lands, damaged by the coal output, is a serious issue.
- The region of Stara Zagora has registered air pollutions mainly from chemical industry and water pollution (people and industry). This kind of pollution is also over regional character and should be an object of the regional plan—regional development.

(h) Demographic characteristics

The existing internal territorial disproportion of development in population shows more favorable demographic development in the larger municipalities within the region. There is a permanent process of growing old population.

The educational structure of the population in the region of Stara Zagora has values close on the average for the country. The relative quota of highly educated population (higher, college, secondary education) is 41.2% from the total population above 7 years old. The qualitative characteristic of population differentiated in regions shows the same territorial disproportions, typical for the rest of the demographic indicators. The most favorable characteristics (most educated) refer to the population in the municipality of Stara Zagora and Kazanlak—48.7% and 46.6%. This is because educated people are concentrated in municipal centers. Disadvantages in educational structure have the smallest municipals within the region.

As in other regions, economic characteristics and employment in the region of Stara Zagora is one of the indicators for social problem occurrence.

During the first decade of the Transition (1989–1998), the employment rate has decreased constantly. As a result from the economic environment, there has been a decrease in production, structural changes in economic branch, etc. The employment level is 31.0%. In branch aspect, the greatest number of employed people is in production (65.6% from all people, employed in building and agriculture). In territorial aspect, larger municipalities have a higher lever of employment.

The territorial basis of the region includes 205 villages (ten cities/towns and 195 villages/rural areas). The villages and their adjacent lands form two types of territorial and town structures:

- Formal administrative and territorial units
- Informal territorial and town structures

Regions and municipalities belong to the first group. Within the region of Stara Zagora, there have been 11 functioning municipalities since 31st December, 1999.

They are differing in view of available resources and economic and structural potential. In regards with the functional level (economic, social, infrastructural, etc.) of development, municipalities within the region could be classified into three groups:

First group is characterized by a well-developed economic base, high level of technical and social infrastructure, human resources, and good qualitative characteristics. The municipalities of Stara Zagora, Kazanlak, and Radnevo belong to this group. The first two municipalities have multi-branch economy. Revenues from activities amount respectively at 22,060 and 52,505 levs.

Second group is characterized by intermediate development in economic base and already built infrastructure with overregional significance.

Third group is characterized by a weak economic base and low developed functions in the social and technical sphere. The opportunities for future growth have a limited number of directions—agriculture, small and medium-sized enterprises, and balneotherapy. Municipal centers of these municipalities are very small towns (below 10,000 people) and villages.

The population in the region is very low. It decreases from 421.0 thousand people in 1985 to 397.2 thousand people in 1992 and then to 385.9 thousand people in 1998. For the period between the last two census of population (1985–1992), the growth is negative (at -0.54% average annual rate). This is about 2,000 people less than its absolute number. The negative trend continues after 1992.

In accordance with the law for regional development ([State newspaper](#), issue 26, 1999) and ‘Regulation for criteria and territorial scope of the regions for purposive impact’, approved by the Counsel of Ministers on 13th May, 1999, there are types of informal territorial and village units as follows:

Regions for development—one within the territory including the municipalities of Stara Zagora, Kazanlak, and Maglij.

General parameters of the region mentioned above are:³

Area in km ²	2,039.2
Number of villages	85
Population	273,742

The reasons for establishing a region for development with center the city of Stara Zagora are the growth level in social, economic, and infrastructural functions and the opportunities for further exploitation of its resources.

The conducted regional policy, directed towards development of such regions, aims at establishing conditions and environment for accelerated and balanced development with territorial impact on other municipals also.

The idea is for developed regions to become ‘leaders’ of social and economic development of the particular region and main attractive centers for new investments. The criteria for assessment show that there is an opportunity for achieving prompt and stable growth in social–economic and infrastructural development and establishing conditions for demographic stabilization.

³ Region of Stara Zagora, Plan for regional development in the period 2000–2006

Undeveloped rural areas—Municipality of Pavel Banja and Bratja Daskalovi. This type of region has specific problems and priorities and needs purposive aid.

Undeveloped rural areas are characterized by the following indicators:⁴

Area in km ²	1,044.5
Total number of villages	36
Total population	28,279

Reasons for such undeveloped rural areas are the mono-structural and agricultural character of their economics in municipalities within these areas. Other reasons are potentials and resources for various agricultural activities and problems in technical and social infrastructure growth.

Growth in undeveloped rural areas with centers Pavel Banja and Bratia Daskalovi is aided by realization of projects and programs financed by SAPARD in two main directions:

- Aids for agricultural sector growth
- Integrated development of municipalities and villages (Municipality of Stara Zagora, Plan for regional development for the period 2000–2006)

5 Conclusions

The general conclusions for stable development of Municipality of Stara Zagora also included in the regional plan—regional development, are the following:

1. The level of contentment with land resources is good. Special attention is paid to quality agricultural lands assessed as a factor for agricultural sector growth. Natural resources are considered not only as facts but also as opportunities for effective usage. Analyses and assessments of human resources are presented in all municipal strategies. The demographic growth for all municipalities is negative and this would have an impact on future social economic development. The problem is very strong in smaller municipalities. Human resource is estimated too optimistically in view of work experience and qualification characteristics. Analyses and assessments for economic potential in particular municipalities are made under the conditions of insufficient and not objective economic information. All regional strategies describe the results from economic reform in several directions:

- Decrease in production processes
- Restriction of employment
- Raise of unemployment level
- Decrease in tax incomes in municipal budgets

Decreasing production processes in primary and secondary sector result in increasing relative share of employed people in tertiary sector.

2. Analyses and assessments in budget insurance for the region of Stara Zagora describe the same problems in revenues and expenses. Planned expenses for

⁴ Region of Stara Zagora, Plan for regional development in the period 2000–2006

- investments are low. Municipalities find obstacles in conducting independent investment policy. General directions in investment activities include maintenance of municipal roads, social infrastructure, and public urbanization of villages only.
3. The issue concerning inter-municipal integration for mutual problems solution is set in some of the municipal strategies. Analyses and assessments of the processes influenced the current development in the region of Stara Zagora. They describe some basic development problems:

More efficient usage of territorial resources, especially of brown coals. Production processes for brown coal output are in compliance not only with production capacities of 'Maritza East' but also with ecological effects from such production. There is a process of abandoning agricultural lands in most of the municipalities. The reasons vary from not finished land division to destruction of economic organizational structures, etc. The processes of economic restructuring would abate the problems.

There is a permanent trend for population number decrease in all municipalities. This is influenced by a complex of factors with economic, social–physiologic and other background.

A serious problem, which seems to be permanent, is the quality of labor resources. People, unemployed because of structural reforms, should be trained with new skills with a view to new requirements. Training and qualification for obtaining practical skills for starting business and working in small and medium-sized enterprises is not included.

There is a low exploitation of existing production capacities in transport and building industry and in industry as a whole: decrease in production, especially in sales incomes. The number of reasons is great and complicated: lack of markets, low competitive goods, etc.; deteriorated financial status of companies because of budget and social fund engagements and liability to suppliers, creditors; low level of new technologies in production which makes goods high-labor consuming, high-energy consuming, high-resource consuming, or not competitive on local and international markets; restructure in economic base is a process not finished yet. The private business sector does not have leading functions in social and economical complex of the region. For the companies, it is a form of self-employment and its branch structure has lost its shape. More than 70–75% of registered companies operate in the sphere of trade and services; less than 10% are companies dealing with bread making and milk processing (food and tobacco industry).

There are permanent obstacles in the sphere of social infrastructure regarding the establishment of necessary finance resources and current social infrastructure allowance. The financial problem concerns the allowance of health centers, education, social activities, infrastructure, and culture. Problems with ecological background result from human activity. Hot spots in eco aspect are mini Maritza East and the region of Stara Zagora.

The analyzed resources and potentials in municipalities within the region describe the region of Stara Zagora as a district with available resources and regional potential. Expectations for stable growth are connected with goals and priorities realization within the large municipalities in the region. The region of Stara Zagora has significant economical, infrastructural, and labor potential, guaranteeing realization of reasonable goals and priorities for future development.

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