



Bulgaria



Background The Bulgars, a Central Asian Turkic tribe, merged with the local Slavic inhabitants in the late 7th century to form the first Bulgarian state. In succeeding centuries, Bulgaria struggled with the Byzantine Empire to assert its place in the Balkans, but by the end of the 14th century, the Ottoman Turks overran the country. Northern Bulgaria attained autonomy in 1878, and all of Bulgaria became independent from the Ottoman Empire in 1908. Having fought on the losing side in both World Wars, Bulgaria fell within the Soviet sphere of influence and became a People's Republic in 1946. Communist domination ended in 1990, when Bulgaria held its first multiparty election since World War II and began the contentious process of moving toward political democracy and a market economy while combating inflation, unemployment, corruption, and crime. The country joined NATO in 2004, the EU in 2007, and the Schengen Area for air and sea travel in 2024.

Capital name: Sofia

Government type parliamentary republic

Area total : 110,879 sq km
land: 108,489 sq km
water: 2,390 sq km

Climate temperate; cold, damp winters; hot, dry summers

Natural resources bauxite, copper, lead, zinc, coal, timber, arable land

Population total: 6,782,659 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate -0.66% (2024 est.)

Ethnic groups Bulgarian 78.5%, Turkish 7.8%, Roma 4.1%, other 1.2%, unspecified 9.4% (2021 est.)

Religions Christian 64.7%, Muslim 9.8%, other 0.1%, none 4.7%, unspecified 20.7% (2021 est.)

Languages Bulgarian (official) 77.3%, Turkish 7.9%, Romani 3.5%, other 1%, unspecified 10.4% (2021 est.)

Executive branch chief of state: President Rumen RADEV (since 22 January 2017)

head of government: Prime Minister Rosen ZHELYAZKOV (since 16 January 2025)

Legislative branch legislature name: National Assembly (Narodno sabranie)

Diplomatic representation in the US chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Stefka YOVCHEVA (since 7 May 2025)

Diplomatic representation from the US chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires H. Martin McDOWELL (since May 2025)

Economic overview	upper-middle-income EU economy; currency pegged to the euro, with eurozone accession pending; declining energy prices helping lower inflation rate; EU structural funds contributing to investment recovery; skilled labor shortage driven by emigration and aging population
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$219.645 billion (2024 est.) \$213.64 billion (2023 est.) \$209.683 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$34,100 (2024 est.) \$33,100 (2023 est.) \$32,400 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$62.661 billion (2024 est.) \$63.415 billion (2023 est.) \$63.246 billion (2022 est.)
Exports - partners	Germany 14%, Romania 11%, Italy 8%, Greece 6%, Turkey 5% (2023)
Exports - commodities	refined petroleum, garments, refined copper, wheat, natural gas (2023)
Imports	\$60.029 billion (2024 est.) \$59.158 billion (2023 est.) \$62.261 billion (2022 est.)
Imports - partners	Germany 12%, Turkey 8%, Romania 8%, Russia 7%, Italy 6% (2023)
Imports - commodities	crude petroleum, copper ore, cars, packaged medicine, electricity (2023)

Population Pyramid