

Bulgaria

Geography

Location: Southeastern Europe, bordering the Black Sea, between Romania and Turkey

Map references: Ethnic Groups in Eastern Europe, Europe

Area:

total area: 110,910 sq km

land area: 110,550 sq km

Land boundaries: total 1,808 km, Greece 494 km, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 148 km, Romania 608 km, Serbia and Montenegro 318 km (all with Serbia), Turkey 240 km

Coastline: 354 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 24 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

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

Terrain: mostly mountains with lowlands in north and southeast

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

Land use:

arable land: 34%

permanent crops: 3%

meadows and pastures: 18%

forest and woodland: 35%

other: 10%

Irrigated land: 10 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: air pollution from industrial emissions; rivers polluted from raw sewage, heavy metals, detergents; deforestation; forest damage from air pollution and resulting acid rain; soil contamination from heavy metals from metallurgical plants and industrial wastes

natural hazards: earthquakes, landslides

Note: strategic location near Turkish Straits; controls key land routes from Europe to Middle East and Asia

People

Population: 8,775,198 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 19% (female 800,413; male 841,697)

15-64 years: 66% (female 2,927,880; male 2,910,133)

65 years and over: 15% (female 735,706; male 559,369) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: -0.25% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 11.75 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 11.31 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -2.91 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 11.4 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 73.68 years
male: 70.43 years
female: 77.1 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 1.71 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Bulgarian(s)

adjective: Bulgarian

Ethnic divisions: Bulgarian 85.3%, Turk 8.5%, Gypsy 2.6%,
Macedonian 2.5%, Armenian 0.3%, Russian 0.2%, other 0.6%

Religions: Bulgarian Orthodox 85%, Muslim 13%, Jewish 0.8%,
Roman Catholic 0.5%, Uniate Catholic 0.2%, Protestant,
Gregorian-Armenian, and other 0.5%

Languages: Bulgarian; secondary languages closely correspond to
ethnic breakdown

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1992)

total population: 98%

male: 99%

female: 97%

Labour force: 4.3 million
by occupation: industry 33%, agriculture 20%, other 47% (1987)

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Republic of Bulgaria

conventional short form: Bulgaria

Type: emerging democracy

Capital: Sofia

Administrative divisions: 9 provinces (oblasti, singular - oblast);
Burgas, Grad Sofiya, Khaskovo, Lovech, Montana, Plovdiv, Ruse,
Sofiya, Varna

Independence: 22 September 1908 (from Ottoman Empire)

National holiday: Independence Day 3 March (1878)

Constitution: adopted 12 July 1991

Legal system: based on civil law system, with Soviet law influence; has accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal and compulsory

Flag: three equal horizontal bands of white (top), green, and red; the national emblem formerly on the hoist side of the white stripe has been removed - it contained a rampant lion within a wreath of wheat ears below a red five-pointed star and above a ribbon bearing the dates 681 (first Bulgarian state established) and 1944 (liberation from Nazi control)

Economy

Overview: The Bulgarian economy continues its painful adjustment from the misdirected development undertaken during four decades of Communist rule. Many aspects of a market economy have been put in place and have begun to function, but much of the economy, especially the industrial sector, has yet to re-establish market links lost with the collapse of the other centrally planned Soviet Bloc economies. The prices of many imported industrial inputs, especially energy products, have risen markedly, and falling real wages have not sufficed to restore competitiveness. Bulgaria

resumed payments on its \$10 billion in commercial debt in 1993 following the negotiation of a 50% write-off.

Industries: machine building and metal working, food processing, chemicals, textiles, building materials, ferrous and nonferrous metals

Agriculture: climate and soil conditions support livestock raising and the growing of various grain crops, oilseeds, vegetables, fruits, and tobacco; more than one-third of the arable land devoted to grain; world's fourth-largest tobacco exporter; surplus food producer

Illicit drugs: transshipment point for southwest Asian heroin and South American cocaine transiting the Balkan route; limited producer of precursor chemicals

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 4,294 km

Highways:

total: 36,932 km

Inland waterways: 470 km (1987)

Pipelines: crude oil 193 km; petroleum products 525 km; natural gas 1,400 km (1992)

Ports: Burgas, Lom, Nesebur, Ruse, Varna, Vidin

Airports:

total: 355

Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy, Air and Air Defense Forces, Border Troops, Internal Troops