



БЪЛГАРСКА ТЪРГОВСКО-ПРОМИШЛЕНА ПАЛАТА  
BULGARIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

130 години надежден партньор

# BULGARIA IN FIGURES®

16<sup>th</sup>  
edition

130 years reliable partner

2025

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National Statistical Institute,  
Bulgarian National Bank  
and Ministry of Economy and Industry of Bulgaria.

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**Dear Business Partners,**

*In this anniversary 130<sup>th</sup> year of establishing the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, once again we prepared for you the already traditional 16<sup>th</sup> edition of **Bulgaria in Figures** with the intention of providing information to everybody who has chosen Bulgaria for their investments. And again, this year is posing new challenges to us. The continuing conflicts in Ukraine and in the Middle East are now accompanied also by the tension in the world trade relations. Many recent partnerships*

*between the countries suffer damage more or less but there are no empty spaces in the economy and market challenges are the motors of developing the relations among the separate contingents.*

*That's why we are glad that we have the opportunity to present you with the most important and up-to-date information on the Bulgarian economy so that you benefit from the advantages which our country gives equally to both Bulgarian and foreign investors. To these competitive advantages of Bulgaria, we added the country's full legal membership in Schengen and the support of businesses which welcomed very warmly our accession to the Eurozone as from January 2026; that removed the last obstacle for European investors to draw up and implement their investment plans in Bulgaria (<https://bccci.bg/dl/bgeu>). Now we are on the threshold of introducing the Euro. Bulgaria is getting increasingly close to OECD membership and it is only in the near future that this will very well come true. BCCI will continue to work towards achieving these goals.*

*Although there are difficulties in drawing up the budgets of all the countries in the world, employers in Bulgaria received assurance from the political parties, which formed the government, and from most of the Opposition that the main taxes in Bulgaria, being the lowest in the European Union, will not go up.*

*In order to encourage you to get acquainted with all the facts in this Brochure, please do not skip, either, the exhaustive and updated List of Industrial Zones in Bulgaria which we published on the last pages again.*

*Besides, we presented Bulgaria's place in 27 international rankings and as before, the government will be reminded of any poorer results, found out by the experts, as well as of the need for taking specific measures – namely, legislative, administrative and personnel measures, if applicable, to improve the status quo of our country. Companies will always have a reliable partner, namely, the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.*

*And finally, BCCI remains a reliable assistant to all investors in Bulgaria with its numerous services. We will continue to work on improving the economic environment in Bulgaria, on encouraging the trade and investment exchange and on stimulating investors to be active ([bccci.bg/GuidelinesOnActivity](https://bccci.bg/GuidelinesOnActivity)), by organising bilateral and multilateral forums, training sessions and consultations ([bccci.bg/consultation](https://bccci.bg/consultation)) with a view to providing up-to-date economic information ([bccci.bg/subscribe](https://bccci.bg/subscribe)) to companies so that they facilitate the implementation of their commercial and economic ideas and plans.*

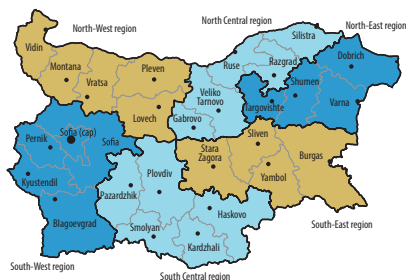
Yours faithfully,

Tsvetan Simeonov

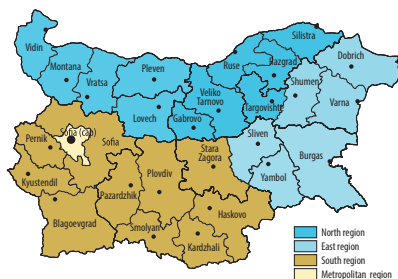
President of the Management Board

Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



In order to keep the contents of *Bulgaria in Figures 2025* up to date, we present you not only with the current *Map of the Regions*, but also the Proposal of the Council of Ministers, whose March 2025 Decision laid down a new scope of the regions to be planned under NUTS-2 in the Republic of Bulgaria; that scope will be submitted by the National Statistical Institute (NSI) to Eurostat for approval. If Bulgaria's Proposal is accepted by the EU, the amendments will enter into force as from 1 January 2027. The Council of Ministers' Decision proposes to establish 4 regions for planning under NUTS-2 in place of the current 6 regions as follows:



### General data

**State government:** Parliamentary Republic

**Head of state:** President

**Head of government:** Prime Minister

**Capital:** Sofia

**Area:** 110 996.76 sq.km

**Administrative and territorial division:** 28 districts and 265 municipalities, 6 regions

**Population:** 6 437 360 persons as of 31.12.2024

**Official language:** Bulgarian

**Religion:** Traditional religion in the Republic of Bulgaria is the Eastern Orthodox creed

**National currency:** LEV (BGN), fixed to the Euro

(1 EUR = 1,95583 BGN) since 1997; member of ERM II – since 2020)

## Facts about Bulgaria

- ▲ EU, NATO and WTO Membership
- ▲ Strategic geographical location and openness to foreign markets: crossroad between Europe, Asia and Africa
- ▲ Stability of the financial environment: Bulgaria's gross public debt is the second lowest in the EU27 (24,6% of GDP) for the third quarter of 2024
- ▲ Business-friendly environment: Simple and low taxation
- ▲ Competitive operational costs and competitive labour level

## Main indicators – actual data

Indicator/Unit of measure	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
GDP (market prices, mill. EUR)	61 913	71 378	86 082	94 709	103 723 (p)
Real GDP growth rate (%)	- 3,2	7,8	4,0	1,9	2,8 (p)
Inflation - Annual average CPI (%)	1,7	3,3	15,3	9,5	2,4
Government deficit/surplus (% of GDP)	- 3,8	- 4,0	- 3,0	- 2,0	- 3,0
Export (mill. EUR)	28 008	34 988	47 508	44 433	43 137 (p)
Import (mill. EUR)	30 743	39 238	55 175	49 663	49 795(p)
Employment rate (%)	68,5	68,5	70,6	70,7	70,9
Unemployment rate (%)	5,2	5,2	4,2	4,4	4,2

p-preliminary

Source: Eurostat, Bulgaria National Bank, National Statistical Institute, Ministry of Finance

## Macroeconomic forecast

	2024	2025	2026
Gross Domestic Product (% change)	2,8	2,0	2,1
Employment growth (%)	0,2	0,3	0,1
Unemployment rate (%)	4,2	4,0	3,8
Inflation (%) (HICP)	2,6	3,6	1,8
General government balance (% of GDP)	-3,0	-2,8	-2,8
General government gross debt (% of GDP)	24,1	25,1	27,1

Source: Spring 2025 Economic Forecast, European Commission

Source: employment growth- Macroeconomic Forecast March 2025 BNB

## BULGARIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL RANKINGS

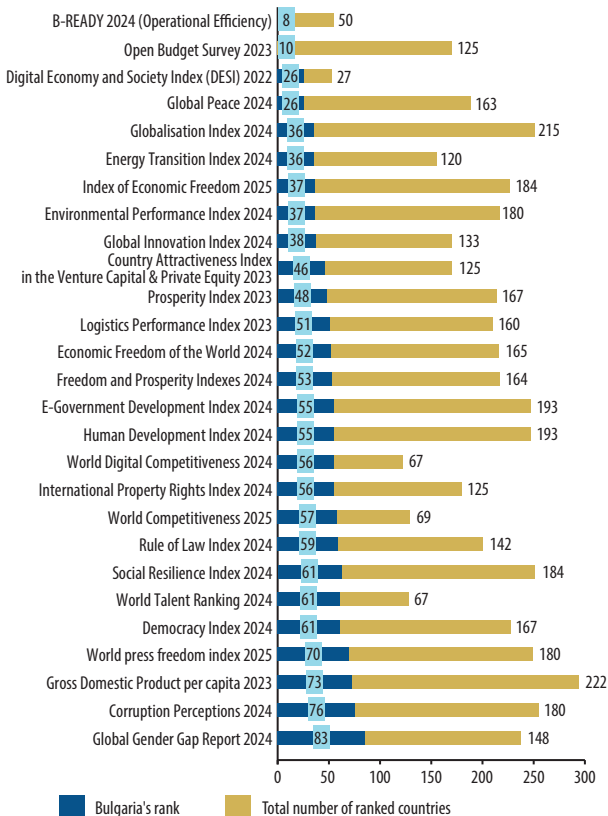
Bulgaria has competitive positions in numerous international indices. According to the following rankings the country has the best performance in Freedom and Prosperity Indexes (Atlantic Council) and Energy Transition Index. In 2024, Bulgaria improved its positions in several global rankings, including the Human Development Index, World competitiveness, Global Peace Index.

A serious decline was observed in World press freedom index and Corruption Perceptions Index.

In edition of BULGARIA IN FIGURES 25 the Doing Business 2020 ranking has already been replaced by the new World Bank B-ready ranking. The third pillar (Operational Efficiency) represents the extent to which state and municipal administrative services help companies to develop their business, and how restrictive are the regulatory and other legal rules in a country.

For more information: <https://bccf.bg/dl/r25>

### Bulgaria in international rankings



Source: Respective websites

## FOCUS ON TAXATION

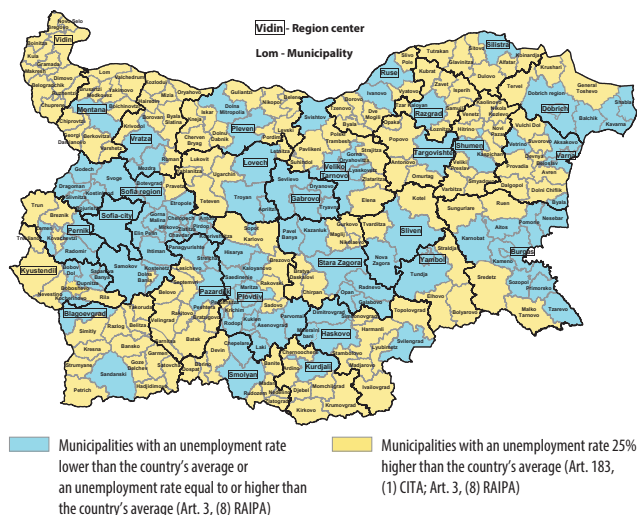
Flat-tax system is introduced in Bulgaria – a single 10% rate applied on personal income and a 10% rate applied on corporate income (imposed respectively in 2008 and 2007). For more than 15 years Bulgaria has not changed the low rates of the direct taxes. Since 1999 the standard rate of value-added tax in Bulgaria has been set on 20%, with the exception of hotel services, where a reduced rate of 9% is applied.

As a Covid-19 measure, in mid-2020 Bulgaria reduced VAT to 9% on certain products and services (children's goods, restaurant and catering services and books). As anti-inflationary measures, the government undertook other reductions in the tax system (zero VAT rate) for bread and flour. These measures have already been restored to standard rates since the beginning of 2025.

In connection with the settlement of the minimum effective taxation of multinational enterprise groups and of large national enterprise groups, from 01.01.2024 the surtax rate is the positive difference between 15 percent and the effective tax rate of the multinational or large national enterprise group for the jurisdiction.

In Bulgaria, taxpayers are exempted from paying corporation tax in regions with high unemployment rates. In 2024 about 61% of municipalities – 162 (of total 265 in Bulgaria) had 25% higher than the average rate of unemployment for the country and there is 0% corporate income tax.

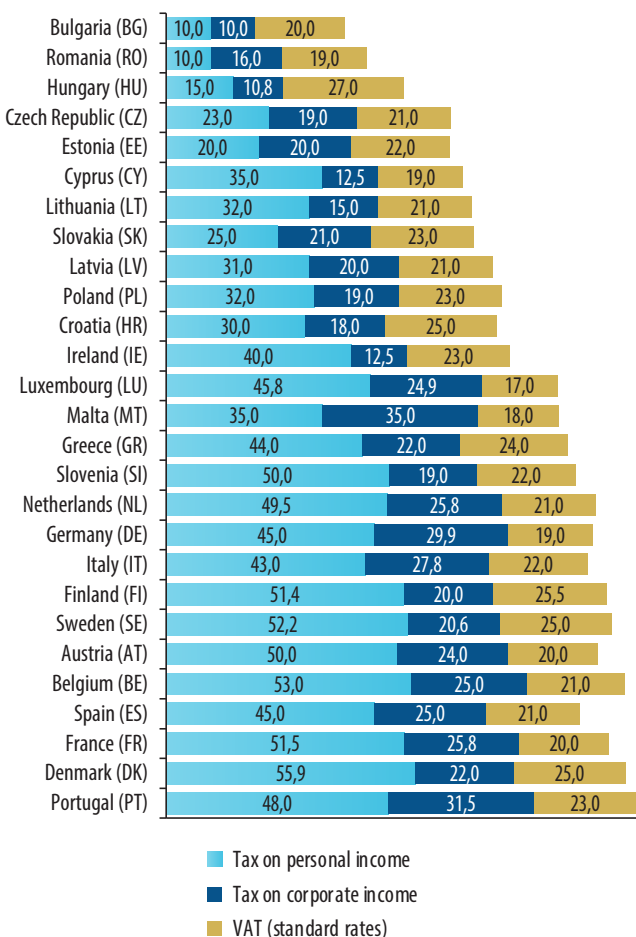
### Unemployment by municipalities – 0% corporate tax in regions shown in yellow



Source: Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Bulgaria

Bulgaria is the sixth least tax burdened country in the EU by 2023: The overall tax-to-GDP ratio in Bulgaria is 29,9% in 2023, compared to an EU average of 40,6%.

## Top statutory income tax rates and standard VAT rates (2024), %



Source: European Commission, DG Taxation and Customs Union, Taxes in Europe database and IBFD data. ANNUAL REPORT ON TAXATION 2024 Review of taxation policies in EU Member States



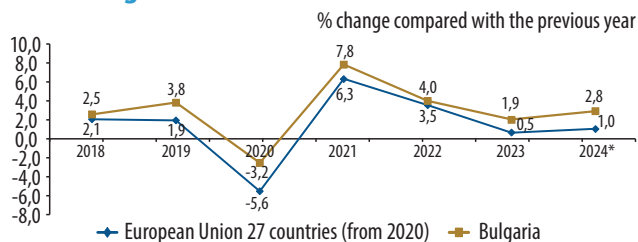
## GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

Bulgarian economy has been growing steadily in the recent years, showing higher rates than the EU average.

Bulgaria's GDP growth slowed to 1,9% in 2023 as a result of global economic and political challenges and increases to 2,8% in 2024. Unfortunately, military conflicts and unstable political and economic environment, with its consequences for the European and global economy, has seriously affected GDP growth for 2023, slowing it down to 1.9%, in addition to the slowdown in the European economy as a whole. Domestic demand, private consumption and exports were the main drivers of GDP growth, as well as the repositioning of Bulgarian companies and the recovery of supply chains disrupted by the pandemic. Economic growth accelerated to 2,8% in 2024, driven by private consumption, which was underpinned by higher real wages, employment gains and increased social transfers.

Bulgarian companies expect the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) to play a leading role in development and recovery with a positive effect on GDP growth.

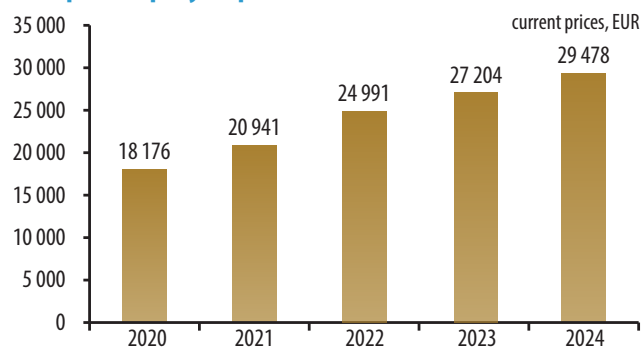
### Real GDP growth rate – volume



Source: Eurostat

Over the past few years, the GDP per employed person has grown. The main factor of growth has been the increase of Gross Value Added in the economy, albeit at a slower pace, through the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past two years, GDP per employee has remained relatively stable from 8,85% in 2023 to 8,4% in 2024.

### GDP per employed person



Source: National Statistical Institute

## Gross Domestic Product and Gross Value Added by economic sectors and economic activity groupings at current year prices

Million EUR

Economic sectors and economic activity groupings	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2 125	3 088	3 195	2 384	2 142
Mining, quarrying and manufacturing	10 940	12 327	18 877	17 793	19 267
Construction	2 571	2 477	2 904	3 666	4 056
Wholesale and retail trade	11 480	14 441	16 705	19 560	20 491
Information and communication	4 509	4 867	5 734	6 847	7 467
Financial and insurance activities	3 224	4 235	5 013	5 326	6 044
Real estate activities	5 217	5 620	6 231	7 178	7 312
Professional, scientific and technical activities; administrative and support service activities	3 741	4 319	5 056	5 846	6 363
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security; education; human health and social work activities	8 872	10 021	11 608	13 387	15 688
Arts, entertainment and recreation, repair of household goods and other services	1 065	1 069	1 212	1 411	1 545
<b>Gross Value Added</b>	<b>53 744</b>	<b>62 465</b>	<b>76 534</b>	<b>83 041</b>	<b>90 376</b>
Adjustments (taxes less subsidies on products )	8 167	8 913	9 547	11 667	13 345
<b>Gross Domestic Product</b>	<b>61 911</b>	<b>71 377</b>	<b>86 081</b>	<b>94 708</b>	<b>103 721</b>

\* Preliminary data

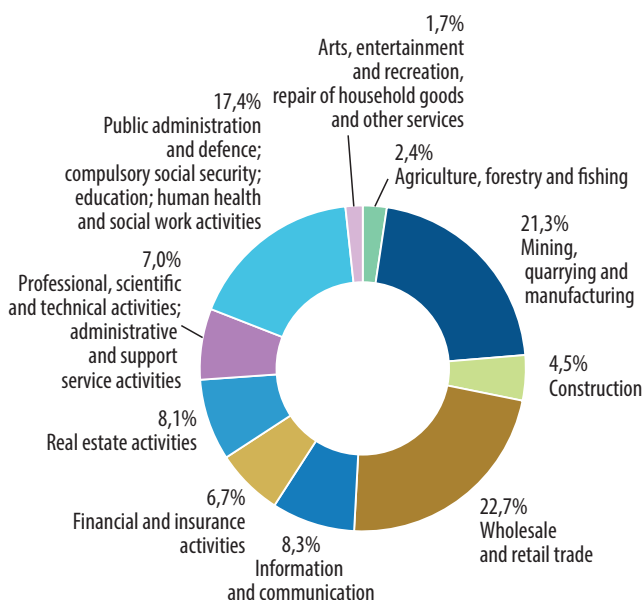
Source: National Statistical Institute

The sectors with the most important role in the growth of gross value added in 2024 are Wholesale and retail trade (23%) and "Mining and manufacturing" (21% share).

The industry sector creates 25.8% of GVA of the national economy, with no change recorded compared to 2023. The agricultural sector declines in share from 2,9% in 2023 to 2,4% in 2024.

## Structure of Gross Value Added by economic sectors and economic activity groupings in 2024

% Share



Source: National Statistical Institute,  
Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## EXPORT

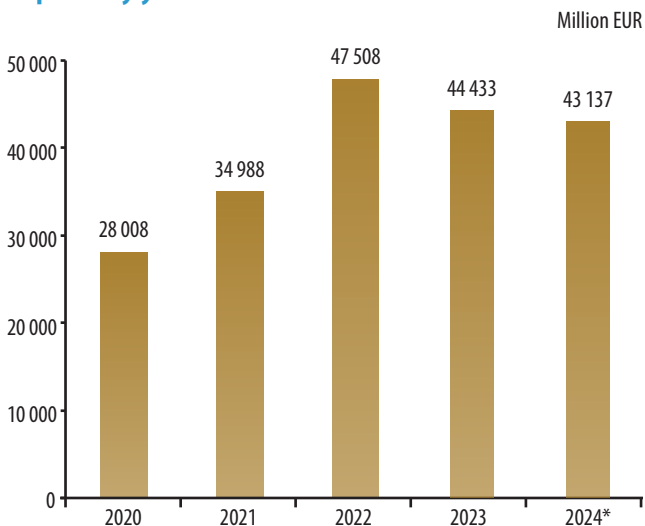
Following the export decline in 2023, 2024 also shows a downturn in exports – 43 billion euros and a decrease of almost (-2,9%). Many Bulgarian companies have successfully managed to maintain and increase their production levels by improving their positions in international supply chains that were disrupted due to the pandemic and the conflict in Europe.

In almost all commodity groups there are significant changes compared to 2023. The highest growth of all exported goods and materials for 2024 compared to the previous year's numbers was reported by non-ferrous metals (24,7%), followed by tobacco (11,8%) in 2024.

Bulgaria's top 10 export partners, which account for over 55% of the country's total export volume, are Germany, Romania, Italy, Turkey, Greece, etc.

Exports of goods and services contracted, weighed down by the Russian war of aggression, with combined nominal goods exports to Ukraine and the Russian Federation contracting by around one third compared to the previous year. Lower demand for Bulgarian goods from China and the UK also contributed to the decline in nominal exports. The outlook for exports is expected to still turn positive in 2025, due to positive growth in the first quarter, and to accelerate moderately in 2026. Exports of goods in 2025 are also affected by planned maintenance works in the steel production and oil refining sectors.

### Exports by years



\*Preliminary data

Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## Exports by commodity groups

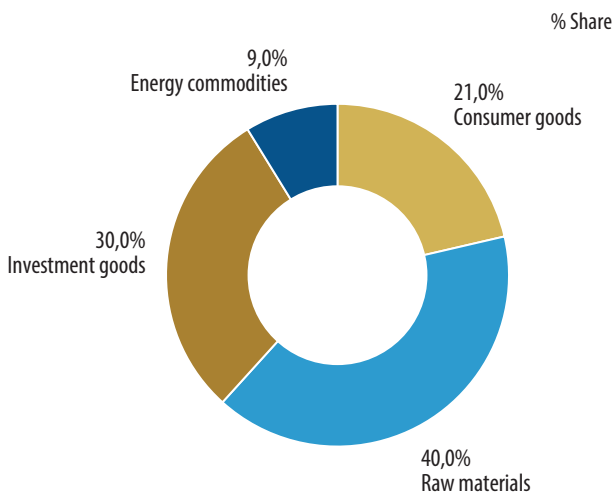
Million EUR

Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
<b>Consumer goods</b>	<b>7 662</b>	<b>8 471</b>	<b>10 797</b>	<b>10 236</b>	<b>9 218</b>
Food	1 884	2 329	3 658	3 077	2 829
Tobacco	54	54	83	114	127
Beverages	211	159	143	156	150
Clothing and footwear	1 373	1 384	1 701	1 618	1405
Medicines and cosmetics	1 344	1 289	1 425	1 636	1635
Furniture and household appliances	1 274	1 609	1 648	1 453	1 442
Others	1 523	1 646	2 140	2 182	1 632
<b>Raw materials</b>	<b>11 679</b>	<b>15 098</b>	<b>18 842</b>	<b>17 584</b>	<b>17 400</b>
Iron and steel	535	977	1 102	897	783
Non-ferrous metals	2 570	3 215	4 177	3 496	4 361
Chemicals	437	542	777	678	752
Plastics and rubber	1 179	1 475	1 757	1 668	1 697
Fertilizers	158	298	639	388	375
Textiles	495	572	712	664	544
Raw materials for the food industry	2 257	2 989	3 729	3 905	2 991
Wood products, paper and paperboard	520	675	855	659	661
Cement	24	31	27	26	26
Raw tobacco	109	111	109	117	105
Others	3 395	4 213	4 959	5 087	5 106
<b>Investment goods</b>	<b>6 886</b>	<b>8 431</b>	<b>11 146</b>	<b>12 445</b>	<b>12 729</b>
Machines and equipment	1 738	2 086	2 702	2 759	2 561
Electrical machines	1 122	1 479	1 808	2 057	2 116
Vehicles	554	638	730	823	878
Spare parts and equipment	1 667	2 014	2 445	2 760	2 571
Others	1 805	2 216	3 461	4 046	4 603
<b>Total non energy commodities</b>	<b>26 227</b>	<b>32 000</b>	<b>40 785</b>	<b>40 266</b>	<b>39 347</b>
<b>Energy commodities</b>	<b>1 697</b>	<b>2 890</b>	<b>6 723</b>	<b>4167</b>	<b>3791</b>
Petroleum products	1 008	1 121	3 983	2 620	2684
Others	689	1 768	2 740	1 547	1 107
incl. Electricity		690	613	529	430
<b>Other Exports</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPORTS /FOB/</b>	<b>28 008</b>	<b>34 988</b>	<b>47 508</b>	<b>44 433</b>	<b>43 138</b>

\*Preliminary data

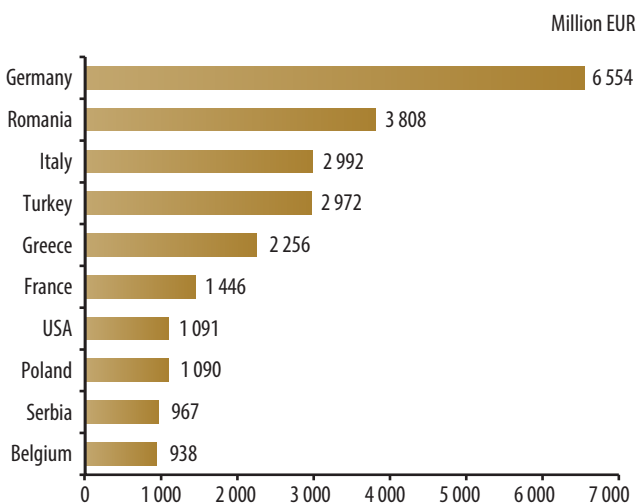
Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## Structure of exports by commodity groups in 2024



Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## Exports to the TOP 10 Bulgarian trade partner countries in 2024



Source: Bulgarian National Bank

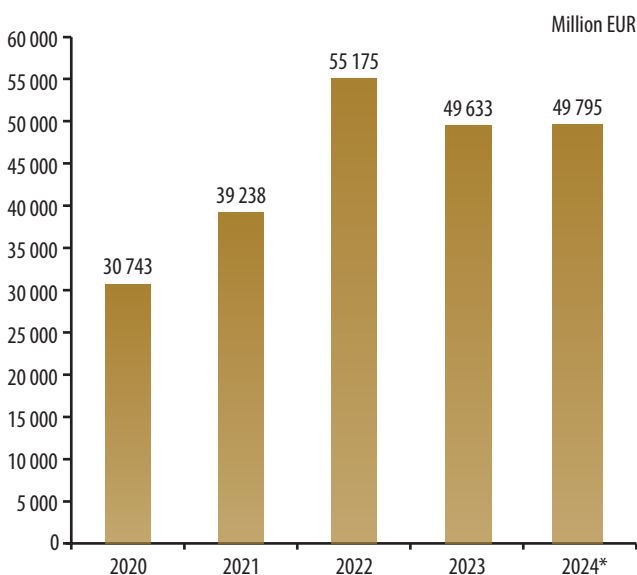
## IMPORT

Import of goods in 2024 marked a positive change of 0,3% compared to the previous year.

The level of imports in 2024 amounts to more than 49,7 billion EUR. The leading partners in terms of imports are China, Germany and Turkey.

The largest increase in imports was in Raw materials and Energy Commodities : Ores (30.7%), followed by crude oil and natural gas (19,7 %) and raw materials for the food industry (12,3%), while the largest declines were in Coal (-56,5%), Vehicles (-17,6 %) and Textiles (-14%).

### Imports by years



\*Preliminary data

Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## Imports by commodity groups

Million EUR

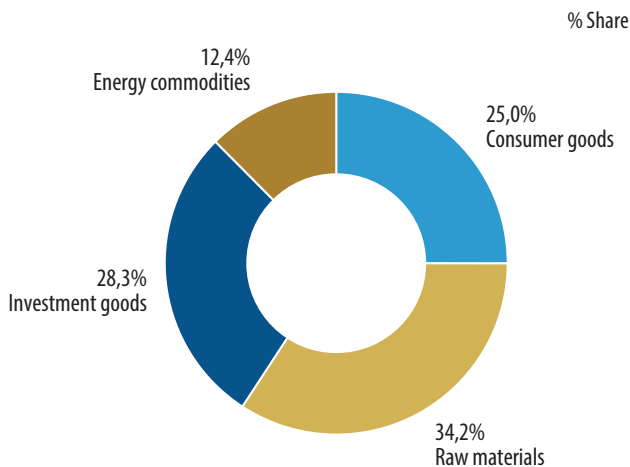
Years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
<b>Consumer goods</b>	<b>7 558</b>	<b>8 844</b>	<b>11 445</b>	<b>11 985</b>	<b>12 460</b>
Food, drinks and tobacco	2 589	2 885	4 007	4 315	4 763
Furniture and household appliances	1 019	1 387	1 562	1 468	1 486
Medicines and cosmetics	1 585	1 703	1 900	2 174	2 277
Clothing and footwear	802	963	1 405	1 422	1 361
Automobiles	393	485	634	842	893
Others	1 171	1 422	1 937	1 764	1 677
<b>Raw materials</b>	<b>11 643</b>	<b>19 678</b>	<b>19 687</b>	<b>16 753</b>	<b>17 032</b>
Ores	1 903	2 475	2 475	2 095	2 738
Iron and steel	1 029	2 204	2 204	1 671	1 559
Non-ferrous metals	855	1 681	1 681	1 499	1 553
Textiles	965	1 272	1 272	1 094	941
Wood products, paper and paperboard	607	1 045	1 045	898	824
Chemicals	749	1 268	1 268	1 081	1 055
Plastics and rubber	1 744	2 829	2 829	2 525	2 516
Raw materials for the food industry	1 081	1 965	1 966	1 343	1 508
Raw skins	52	53	53	43	40
Raw tobacco	58	88	88	83	82
Others	2 599	4 799	4 798	4 421	4 216
<b>Investment goods</b>	<b>8 404</b>	<b>10 280</b>	<b>13 795</b>	<b>14 942</b>	<b>14 106</b>
Machines and equipment	2 712	3 205	4 091	4 245	4 043
Electrical machines	1 359	1 756	2 333	2 557	2 451
Vehicles	1 206	1 565	2 108	2 749	2 264
Spare parts and equipment	1 621	2 160	3 240	3 138	2 779
Others	1 507	1 593	2 023	2 253	2 571
<b>Total non energy commodities</b>	<b>27 604</b>	<b>34 001</b>	<b>44 918</b>	<b>43 679</b>	<b>43 597</b>
<b>Energy commodities</b>	<b>2 929</b>	<b>4 993</b>	<b>10 257</b>	<b>5 953</b>	<b>6 198</b>
Fuels			8 618	4 551	4 960
Crude oil and Natural gas	2 228	3 948	7 129	3 873	4 637
Coal	1 779	3 243	346	94	41
Oils	701	1 045	1 639	1 402	1 238
<b>Other Imports</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>0,1</b>	<b>0,1</b>	<b>0,1</b>
<b>TOTAL IMPORTS /CIF/</b>	<b>30 743</b>	<b>39 238</b>	<b>55 175</b>	<b>49 633</b>	<b>49 795</b>

\*Preliminary data

Source: Bulgarian National Bank

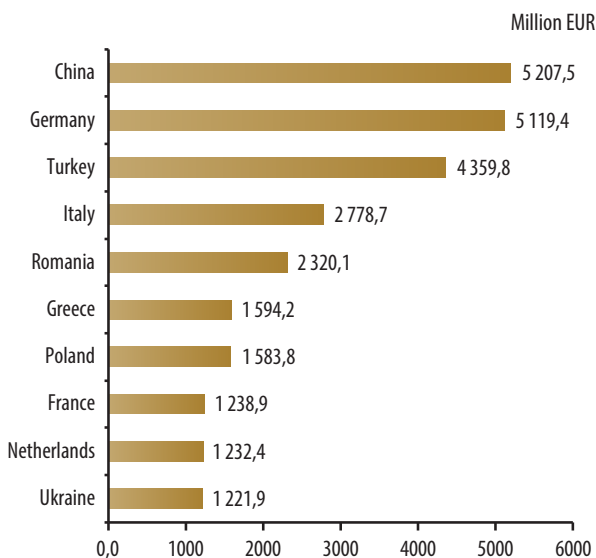


## Structure of imports by commodity groups in 2024



Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## Imports from the TOP 10 Bulgarian trade partner countries in 2024

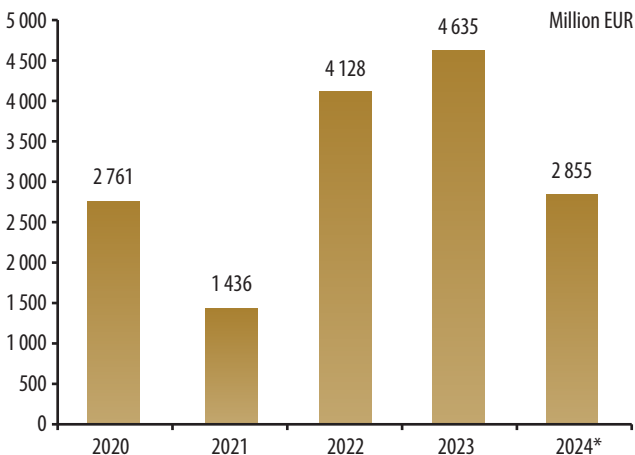


Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

Foreign direct investment in Bulgaria reached EUR 2 855 million in 2024. The composition of FDI by country in 2024 suggests that foreign direct investments attracted from Belgium (EUR 584 million), Austria (EUR 565 million euros) and Greece (EUR 417 million) accounted for the largest shares.

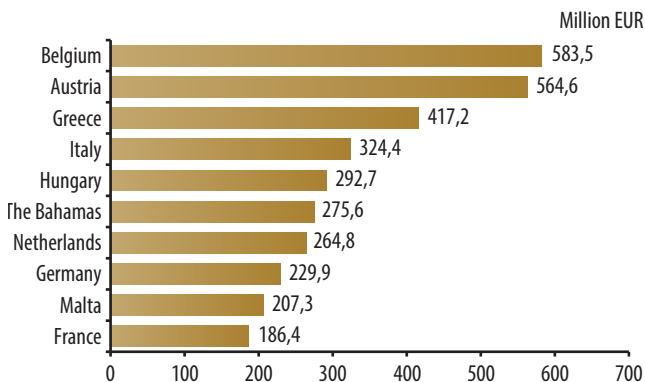
### Foreign direct investment flows in Bulgaria by years



\*Preliminary data

Source: Bulgarian National Bank

### Foreign direct investment flows in Bulgaria – TOP 10 countries in 2024



Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## Foreign direct investment flows in Bulgaria by economic activity

Financial and insurance activities attracted about 52% of all FDI flows in 2024, followed by wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (23%).

Million EUR

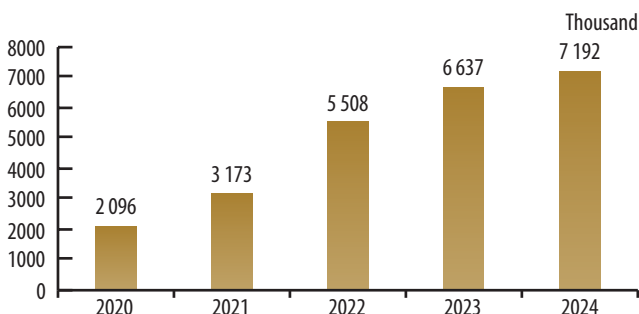
Year	2024
<b>All FDI activities</b>	<b>2 854,5</b>
Construction	23,9
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	13,4
Mining and quarrying	-226,1
Manufacturing	47,3
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	164,3
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	52,8
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	665,0
Transportation and storage	83,3
Accommodation and food service activities	-0,2
Information and communication	124,9
Financial and insurance activities	1 493,0
Real estate activities	107,8
Professional, scientific and technical activities	228,9
Administrative and support service activities	43,4
Education	2,1
Human health and social work activities	1,8
Arts, entertainment and recreation	34,7
Other service activities	9,6
Not allocated	-15,3

Source: Bulgarian National Bank

## TOURISM

Tourism has an important role in Bulgaria due to its economic, social and employment potential. The number of international tourists grew rapidly until 2019. In 2024, Bulgarian tourism continued to recover, reaching almost the pre-pandemic levels.

### Foreign tourists in Bulgaria



Source: National Statistical Institute

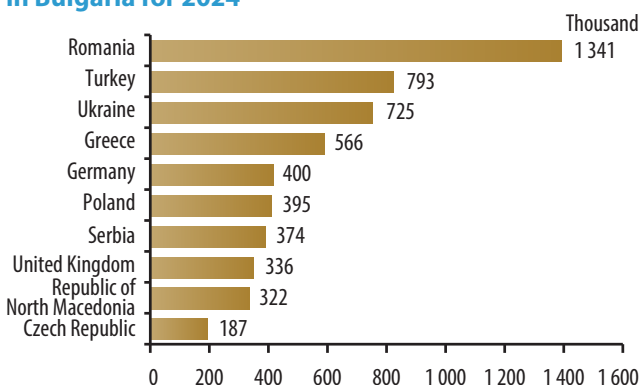
**Notes:** The included indicators for forming the total value of the "Tourism" point include – "Visits of foreigners to Bulgaria for the purpose of rest and excursion" and "Visits of foreigners to Bulgaria for business purposes". The following reasons for travel do not correspond – "visiting", "transit" and "others".

In 2024, the number of foreign tourists in Bulgaria is 7,2 million people. Foreign tourist has increased by 8% compared to 2023.

On 1 January 2025, Romania and Bulgaria became full members of the Schengen Area after the checks on persons at the internal land borders were lifted.

Schengen membership provides a strategic advantage and opens new opportunities for Bulgarian tourism. Bulgaria's accession by land facilitates the country's position as a transit hub. Increased interest from Western Europe is expected thanks to the easier movement and simplified procedures.

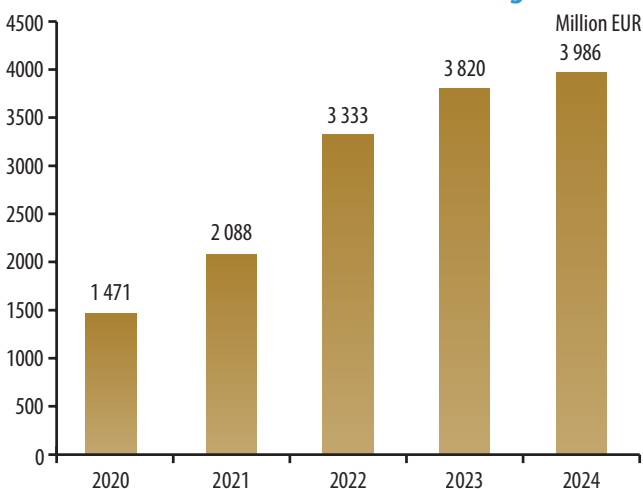
### TOP 10 countries ranked by number of tourists in Bulgaria for 2024



Source: National Statistical Institute

The ranking by number of tourists for 2024 is headed by Romania with 1,34 million tourists, followed by Turkey with 793 thousand tourists, Ukraine with 725 thousand tourists and Greece – 566 thousand tourists.

### Revenue from international tourism in Bulgaria



Source: Bulgarian National Bank

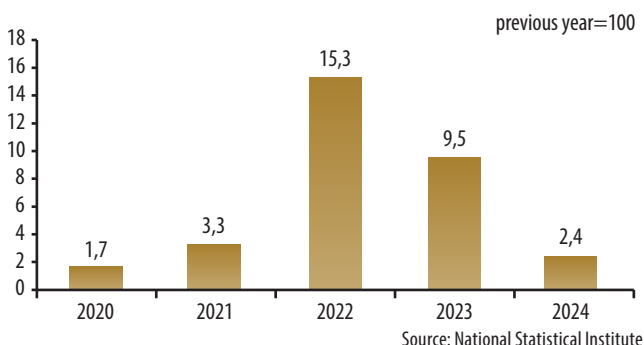
## CONSUMER PRICES

### Consumer price indices and annual inflation

In 2024, the average consumer price index was positive at 2,4%, marking a serious decline from 2023, when it was 9,5%.

HICP inflation slowed to 2,6% in 2024. The price hikes at the beginning of 2025 were due to restored higher VAT rates on bread and restaurants, higher excise duties on tobacco, increased electricity, gas, other utilities and administered prices and higher food prices. Inflation developments for the rest of 2025 and in 2026 are also set to be driven by both external and domestic factors.

### Consumer price index (annual average inflation rates – %)



### Annual average consumer price index by main categories (annual average inflation rates – %)

previous year=100

Main categories	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Total CPI</b>	<b>1,7</b>	<b>3,3</b>	<b>15,3</b>	<b>9,5</b>	<b>2,4</b>
Food and non-alcoholic beverages	5,4	2,8	22,0	13,7	2,6
Alcoholic beverages and tobacco	1,6	0,8	2,6	6,1	5,9
Clothing and footwear	-1,7	-1,1	6,6	5,7	-0,4
Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels	1,0	4,8	19,7	7,1	3
Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance	0,9	1,9	11,6	9,0	0,8
Health	2,8	0,8	3,2	11,6	3,4
Transport	-7,3	10,4	22,7	-1,8	0,6
Communication	-1,4	-2,6	0,7	5,5	-2,3
Recreation and culture	0,6	5,8	10,9	12,4	0,2
Education	3,8	4,8	7,0	10,1	7,1
Restaurants and hotels	4,7	3,2	17,6	13,5	7,7
Miscellaneous goods and service	1,7	1,6	6,5	12,2	4,5

Source: National Statistical Institute

# LABOUR MARKET

## Labour force

According to the latest statistics, in 2024 the labor force in Bulgaria consisted of 3 million people - 53% men and 47% women. The majority of the workforce (91%) has completed some forms of higher or upper secondary education.

### Labour force

Thousand

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
<b>Total (15 and over)</b>	<b>3290</b>	<b>3034</b>	<b>3068</b>	<b>3064</b>	<b>3060</b>
Labour force (15-64 years)	3190	2940	2965	2951	2946
<b>By sex</b>					
Male	1714	1567	1572	1560	1560
Female	1477	1373	1393	1392	1385
<b>By level of education</b>					
Higher	1017	961	964	979	1076
Upper secondary	1785	1638	1668	1660	1599
Lower secondary	321	288	288	267	225
Primary or lower	68	52	45	45	45

Source: National Statistical Institute

## Employment

In 2024, the employment rate was 70,9%, slightly up from 70,7% in 2023. The number of employees decreased by 18 thousand people numbered 2,6 million. The largest share of employees is in private enterprises -67%, followed by employees in the public sector – 22% and self-employed – 7%.

### Employment

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Employment rate (15-64 years), %	<b>68,5</b>	<b>68,5</b>	<b>70,6</b>	<b>70,7</b>	<b>70,9</b>
	Number (thousand)				
<b>Total employment</b>	<b>3122</b>	<b>2877</b>	<b>2941</b>	<b>2932</b>	<b>2933</b>
Employers	112	108	115	120	143
Self-employed	215	195	199	198	197
<b>Employees</b>					
In private enterprises	2091	1933	2012	2003	1951
In public enterprises	685	625	599	598	632
Unpaid family workers	19	16	15	13	10

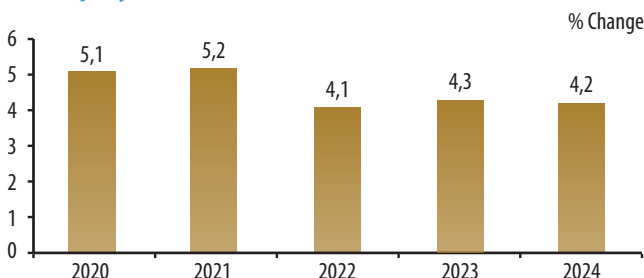
Source: National Statistical Institute

## Unemployment

Unemployment remains at a record low of 4,2% in 2024 and is expected to continue to decline. Due to the extremely low unemployment rates in the country and the inclusion of measures to preserve jobs, the impact of COVID 19 has been less felt.

In 2024 the labour market remained tight, with an unemployment rate at around 4%. Nominal growth in compensation per employee slowed from 13,8% in 2024-Q1 to 4% in 2024-Q4, as inflation pressures subsided, and firms aimed to curb costs.

### Unemployment

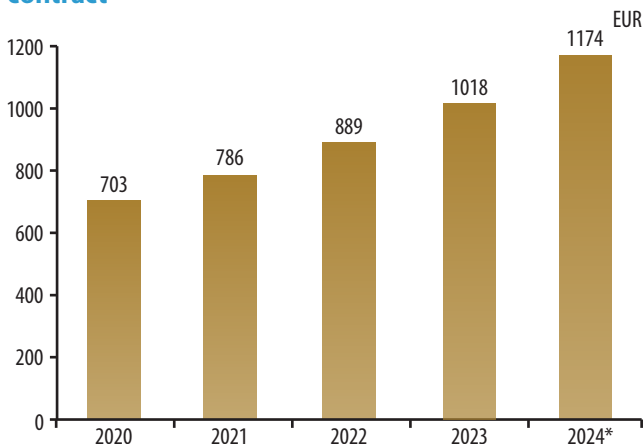


Source: National Statistical Institute

## Average monthly salary

In 2024, the average labour costs per hour reported in Bulgaria (EUR 10,6) are almost 3,2 times lower than the average (EUR 33,5). In 2024, average labour costs per hour were estimated at EUR 33,5 in the EU and at EUR 37,3 in the Eurozone. In 2024, average monthly wages for employees in Bulgaria have risen to EUR 1174, a significant nominal increase of 15,3%.

### Average monthly salary of employees by labor contract



\*Preliminary data

Source: National Statistical Institute, Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

## EDUCATION

Higher education plays a crucial role for the development of intelligent and sustainable economy. Thanks to the efforts of the higher education institutions in the country, they continue to attract the most talented students. Bulgarian universities offer a wide range of specialties.

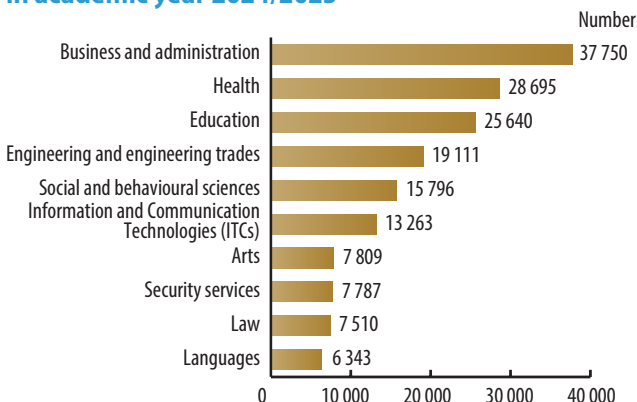
### Higher schools by type

Academic year	Number
<b>2024/25</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>
Universities and equivalent higher schools	48
Colleges	19
Independent colleges	3
Colleges, at the universities and equivalent higher schools	16

Source: National Statistical Institute

The types of higher education institutions in Bulgaria are Universities and equivalent higher schools and Colleges. During the 2024/2025 academic year in the 51 educational institutions the total number of the students (in degrees “Professional bachelor”, “Bachelor”, “Master” and “PhD”) is 203 517.

### TOP 10 field of education by number of students in academic year 2024/2025



Source: National Statistical Institute

The most preferred fields of education (for all degrees) in Bulgaria are “Business and Administration” (19%), followed by “Health” (14%), “Education”(13%) and “Engineering and engineering trades” (9%). Universities in Bulgaria attract many international students due to excellent quality education, diploma recognized in EU/EEA and beyond, good level of costs and different programs in English, German and French.



## **BULGARIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY – important facts and figures**

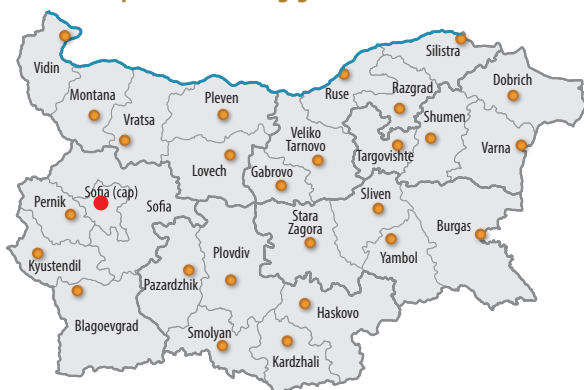
- ▲ The BCCI is the leading employers' association in Bulgaria – comprising of over 58 000 members and Trade Representation Offices, in which more than 690 thousand persons are employed on Employment Contracts (32% of the total, employed in this country).
- ▲ The BCCI is based on the principles of voluntary membership, autonomy and self-financing and seeks to establish ethical and socially responsible relationships in business.
- ▲ The BCCI contributes to the creation of a more favourable business environment and dedicates many efforts to the promotion and support of entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives.
- ▲ The BCCI is a part of the Association of the Organisations of Bulgarian Employers (AOBE) – a free union of the four employers' organisations that are officially acknowledged as representative under the effective legislation.
- ▲ The BCCI is a universal organisation in which all members are companies from various sectors and of different sizes, which comply with the Code of Business Ethics.
- ▲ 28 Regional Commerce and Industry Chambers and offices are united in the Unified System of the Bulgarian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.
- ▲ BCCI participates in over 200 public-private bodies.
- ▲ BCCI has 294 local bodies in 265 municipalities, i.e. full territorial coverage of the country is provided.
- ▲ BCCI is a regular member of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), World Chambers Federation (WCF), Association of European Chambers of Commerce (Eurochambres), World Trade Centers Association (WTCA), Association of the Balkan Chambers (ABC), Regional Cooperation Council, International Council on Cooperation, BSEC Business Council, Central European Initiative (CEI), GS1 AISBL, Silk Road Chamber of International Commerce (SRCIC), Chambers of Commerce within the Three Seas Initiative, etc.
- ▲ A Club of Joint and Foreign Chambers in Bulgaria with over 50 organisations operates at BCCI.
- ▲ 99 Sectoral Organisations – members of the Council of Sectoral Organisations at BCCI.
- ▲ An Arbitration Court with more than 125 years of activity operates at BCCI.

**130 years reliable partner and source  
of information for entrepreneurs**

## BULGARIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

The 28 Regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry & offices

<https://www.bcci.bg/general-bcci-en.html>



### Structures and services



**BCCI – CENTRE FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING,  
TRANSLATIONS, CONSULTATIONS  
AND COMPANY SERVICES EOOD**

 Additional information:

<https://www.center.bcci.bg/15>

#### Main activities:

1. Consultations on economic activity; legal issues; projects for financing; marketing research; tax issues.
2. Filling in/elaboration of commercial documents.
3. Translation / interpretation services.
4. Training.
5. Fairs and Exhibitions.

For Contacts: **Margarita Damyanova**

Tel.: (+359 2) 8117 477

E-mail: [M.Damyanova@bcci.bg](mailto:M.Damyanova@bcci.bg)



**3D CENTER FOR 3D PRINTING, SCANNING  
AND MODELING**

 Additional information:

<https://3dcenter.bg>

#### Main activities:

1. Prototyping and production of small series of details using 3D printers.
2. Reengineering of details and entire products using 3D scanners.
3. 3D modeling.
4. Trainings.
5. Research and Development Projects.

For Contacts: **Vasil Todorov**

Tel.: (+359 2) 8117 457

E-mail: [office@3dcenter.bg](mailto:office@3dcenter.bg)



## TRADE REGISTER AND MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORATE



Additional information:

<https://www.bcci.bg/tradereg-system-en.html>

### Main activities:

1. Trade Register Services
  - ▲ Registration of companies, organisations and other legal persons in the voluntary Unified Trade Register of BCCI;
  - ▲ Obligatory registration of the Trade Representation Offices of foreign persons in Bulgaria;
  - ▲ Maintenance and update of the information on the legal persons, registered in the BCCI Trade Register;
  - ▲ Issuing Certificates and Reports in Bulgarian and in foreign languages about the status and financial condition of the registered legal persons;
  - ▲ Providing verbal and written information in Bulgarian and in foreign languages with data about the registered legal persons.
2. Membership with BCCI.
3. Issuance and validation of documents:
  - ▲ Certificates of origin of Goods, including electronic certificates; BCCI is the only organisation in Bulgaria accredited by ICC WCF-Paris to issue Certificates of Origin of Goods. BCCI has a Permit from the Bulgarian Customs Agency to issue Non-Preferential Certificates of Origin of Goods;
  - ▲ Validation of the signatures of the legal representatives of the registered legal persons, put on Export Invoices, Declarations, etc.
4. Issue of ATA Carnets – international unified customs guarantee documents for temporary importation, exportation and transit of goods under the International Convention ATA and the Istanbul Convention for Temporary Import.
5. Issue of Certificates of Force Majeure.
6. Assistance in obtaining information about the existence and current status of foreign companies.
7. BCCI offers services for issuing of personal and professional qualified electronic signature.
8. Carrying out interaction with the 28 Regional Commerce and Industry Chambers and offices.
9. Carrying out interaction and coordination with the Sectoral Organisations which are members of the Council of Sectoral Organisations at BCCI.

For Contacts: **Zdravka Georgieva, Director**

Tel.: (+359 2) 987 88 84, 8117 476

E-mail: [z.georgieva@bcci.bg](mailto:z.georgieva@bcci.bg)



## EUROPEAN INTEGRATION AND EUROPEAN PROJECTS DIRECTORATE

**i** Additional information:

<http://www.bcci.bg/projectsBCCI.htm>

<http://www.bcci.bg/seminars-en.html>

<http://www.bcci.bg/economic-analyses-en.html>

### Main activities:

1. Participation in EU funded projects.
2. Enhancing the BCCI's capacity to manage activities under EU programmes.
3. Writing and submitting proposals under EU programmes focused on innovations and business environment improvement to enforce the capacity and competitiveness of SMEs and support them to be smart, green, connected and social.
4. Supporting the development and strengthening of the SMEs, providing them the opportunities for participation in exchange EU programmes, free participation in fairs, business missions, match making events, including them in new business networks etc.
5. Business research inquiries at a request of the customers.
6. Economic analyses by sectors.
7. Database references about the financial results of a company or a group of companies.
8. Annual classification TOP 100/ TOP 1500 – The leading companies in the Bulgarian economy.
9. Provision of information based on the annual financial statements of the companies.
10. Publication of annual financial statements.

For Contacts: **Mariana Tancheva, Director**

Tel.: (+359 2) 988 34 82; 8117 508

E-mail: [mtancheva@bcci.bg](mailto:mtancheva@bcci.bg)

**Economic Analysis and Policy Department**, Tel.: (+359 2) 8117 410



## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIRECTORATE

**i** Additional information:

<http://www.bcci.bg/business-delegations-en.html>

<http://www.bcci.bg/seminars-en.html>

<http://www.bcci.bg/company-presentation.html>

### Main activities:

1. Assistance for establishing business contacts with partners from all over the world, matchmaking.
2. Organizing workshops and seminars with Bulgarian and foreign lecturers for entrepreneurs.
3. Organizing business missions.
4. Cooperation with partnering national and international business organizations.

For Contacts: **Gabriela Dimitrova, Director**

Tel.: (+359 2) 987 25 38; 8117 489

E-mail: [interdpt@bcci.bg](mailto:interdpt@bcci.bg), [G.Dimitrova@bcci.bg](mailto:G.Dimitrova@bcci.bg)



## ARBITRATION COURT AT BCCI

**i** Additional information:

<https://www.bcci.bg/bcci-arbitration-court-en.html>

### Main activities:

1. Out-of-court tribunal institution for fast and efficient settlement of private law property disputes.
2. Four times lower taxes for big claims in comparison with the taxes, applied by public court.
3. A possibility in disputes where one party is a foreign person or a local company with prevailing foreign participation, such party may appoint a foreign citizen for arbitrator who is not included in the list of arbitrators for international cases.
4. 79% of the cases are solved within 1 year.
5. Possibility to involve private law enforcement agents.
6. AC at BCCI provided to the participants in the arbitration proceedings access to the case files through bilingual electronic internet-based platform.
7. The possibility to hear cases remotely via videoconferencing has been created, which further reduces costs and saves time for the parties in the arbitration process.
7. Regional lists of arbitrators are created.

*Arbitration Clause, recommended by the BCCI: "Any disputes arising from this contract or concerning it, including disputes arising from or concerning its interpretation, invalidity, non-performance of termination, as well as disputes about filling gaps in a contract or its adaption to newly arisen circumstances, shall be settled by the Arbitration Court at the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in accordance with its Rules for cases based on Arbitration Agreements."*

For Contacts: **President of the AC at the BCCI**

**Natalia Stefanova**, Secretary of the Arbitration Court

**Nina Nikolova**, Secretary of the Arbitration Court

Tel.: (+359 2) 8117 434, 8117 546, 8117 561

E-mail: [acourt@bcci.bg](mailto:acourt@bcci.bg)



## GS1 BULGARIA

**i** Additional information:

<http://www.gs1bg.org>

### Main activities:

Member of GS1 AISBL - non-profit organization that develops and maintains global standards for unique identification as well as capturing and sharing product, location, packaging and other data.

GS1 is best known for the BARCODE, named by the BBC as one of "the 50 things that made the world economy". The standards improve the efficiency and transparency along the supply chain across physical and digital channels in 25 sectors.

GS1 Bulgaria brings together more than 4700 Bulgarian companies – from international household names to small local businesses. GS1 Bulgaria offers a variety of services to its members, which helps companies to leverage their business.

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Tel.: (+359 2) 8117 604

E-mail: [gs1bulgaria@gs1bg.org](mailto:gs1bulgaria@gs1bg.org)

## INDUSTRIAL ZONES

### INDUSTRIAL ZONES of "National Company Industrial Zones"

<http://www.nciz.bg/>

**SOFIA-BOZHURISHTA ECONOMIC ZONE**, Sofia

**INDUSTRIAL AND LOGISTIC PARK – BURGAS**, Burgas

**FREE ZONE-RUSE**, Ruse

**INDUSTRIAL ZONE VIDIN**, Vidin

**INDUSTRIAL ZONE SVILENGRAD**, Svilengrad

**TRANSIT TRADE ZONE VARNNA**, Varna

**INDUSTRIAL ZONE ZAGORE**, Stara Zagora

### Register of Industrial Parks – Ministry of Economy and Industry of Bulgaria

The Ministry of Economy and Industry of Bulgaria maintains a Register of Industrial Parks under Art. 21. (1) of the Industrial Parks. BCCI prepared a sample of the data from the register.

**INDUSTRIAL PARK PLEVEN**, Telish, Pleven Region

**INDUSTRIAL PARK SOFIA**, Bozhurishte, Sofia region

**VIDIN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Vidin

**KARLOVO INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Karlovo municipality, Plovdiv region

**SUVOROV INDUSTRIAL PARK – VARNNA WEST**, Suvorovo municipality, Varna region

**SHUMEN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Shumen

**LVZ INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Ruse

**HI-TECH INDUSTRIAL PARK HEMUS**, Sofia

**DANUBE INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY PARK SVISHTOV EAD**, Svishtov

**INDUSTRIAL PARK – BURGAS-PHASE 2**, Burgas

**INDUSTRIAL PARK – BURGAS-PHASE 1**, Burgas

**BALKAN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Lovech

**INDUSTRIAL PARK – PERNIK**, Pernik

**DANUBE INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Municipality of Vidin

**MARITSA CARBON NEUTRAL INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Maritsa municipality, Plovdiv Region

**BALKAN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Municipality of Vidin

**TRAKIA INDUSTRIAL PARK – GREEN TRANSITION**, Pazardzhik Municipality

**PLEVEN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Pleven

**HEMUS INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Sofia Municipality

**HEMUS-HARMONY INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Sofia Municipality

**CHELOPECHENE INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Sofia

**INDUSTRIAL PARK – RYAKHOVETS**, Veliko Tarnovo Region

**MADARA-SHUMEN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Shumen

**INDUSTRIAL PARK "ROZHEN 41"**, Sofia

**STRYAMA INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Plovdiv Region

**TSALAPITSA INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Plovdiv Region

**VIDIN INDUSTRIAL PARK – SOUTH**, Vidin

**SLIVEN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Sliven

**INDUSTRIAL PARK FOR HIGH-TECH INTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE-BASED SERVICES**

**"HIGH-TECH PARK BLAGOEVGRAD**, Blagoevgrad

**PLAMA PLEVEN INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Pleven

**HI-TECH INDUSTRIAL PARK "RHODOPI"**, Plovdiv Region

**TRILISTNIK INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Region Plovdiv

**TARGOVISHTA INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Targovishte Municipality

**GREENYARD TECH PARK**, Sliven region

**HIGH-TECH PRODUCTION PARK SOFIA – WEST**, Sofia

**INDUSTRIAL PARK – DOBRICH**, Dobrich

**INDUSTRIAL PARK "INDUSTRIAL ZONE ZAGORE" AD**, Municipality of Stara Zagora

**VIDIN SOUTH 2 INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Vidin District, Vidin

**RADNEVO INDUSTRIAL PARK**, Stara Zagora Region, Radnevo Municipality

For More information: <https://www.mi.government.bg/register/registar-na-industrialnite-parkove-po-chl-21-1-ot-zakona-za-industrialnite-parkove/>

### OTHER INDUSTRIAL ZONES

<http://www.bcci.bg/zones/>

Through our regional Chambers of commerce and industry, BCCI has made a Survey of Industrial zones and has sorted the data in a special Register published on the BCCI website.

We attach a sample from the BCCI Register, comprising some Industrial zones in addition to the ones described above. For more detailed information about a specific Industrial zone or park, please feel welcome to contact us.

**INDUSTRIAL ZONE**, Vratza

**INDUSTRIAL ZONE KARDZHALI – SOUTH**, Kardzhali

**INDUSTRIAL ZONE**, Troyan

**TECHNOLOGY PARK**, Montana

**TRAKIA ECONOMIC ZONE**, Plovdiv

**FREE ZONE – PLOVDIV**, Plovdiv

**BUSINESS ZONE "PERISTAR" – RAZGRAD**, Razgrad

**DIMITROVGRAD INDUSTRIAL ZONE**, Haskovo

**LOGISTICS PARK BPD RUSE**, Ruse

**DANUBE INDUSTRIAL ZONE TEGRA**, Silistra

**LETNITSA INDUSTRIAL ZONE**, Lovech

**KASPICHAN INDUSTRIAL AREA**, Kaspichan, Shumen



The building of Sofia  
Commercial and Industrial Chamber  
2 Slavianska Str., Sofia  
built in 1914

The building of the BCCI  
42 Parchevich Str., Sofia  
Opened 1995



New building of the BCCI  
9 Iskar Str., Sofia

Bulgaria in figures®



Guidelines on the Activity of BCCI



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