

# Bulgaria



Bulgaria has withstood a turbulent past, struggling with the Byzantine Empire and later the Ottoman Turks and Soviet Communists, to arrive at its first multi-party election in 1990. It is slowly moving toward a market economy, having joined NATO in 2004 and is scheduled to join the EU in 2007. Located in Southeastern Europe on the Black Sea, it is tucked between Romania and Turkey. At 110,000 sq. km., it is somewhat larger than Tennessee and is bordered by Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey. This mostly mountainous country has a short coastline on the Black Sea.

The Republic of Bulgaria is governed by a parliamentary democracy seated in Sofia, the capital city, and is divided into 28 provinces. Committed to economic reform, Bulgaria has made steady progress since 1996 after the fall of the socialist government, growing at about 4% a year for the past 6 years. Bulgaria produced vegetables, fruits, tobacco, wine, wheat, barley, sunflowers, sugar beets and livestock. Its industries include electricity, food, beverages, tobacco, machinery, base metals, chemicals, coke, refined petroleum and nuclear fuel.

Bulgaria exports clothing, footwear, iron and steel, machinery and equipment to Italy, Turkey, Germany, Greece and France. It imports machinery, metals and ores, chemicals, plastics, fuel, minerals and raw materials.

