

Bulgaria

България



eGovernment
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- Country Profile
 - History
 - Strategy
 - Legal Framework
 - Actors
 - Who's Who
 - Infrastructure
 - Services for Citizens
 - Services for Businesses
- What's Inside**



Contents:

| | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Country Profile..... | 1 |
| eGovernment History..... | 3 |
| eGovernment Strategy..... | 6 |
| eGovernment Legal Framework..... | 8 |
| eGovernment Actors..... | 10 |
| eGovernment Who's Who..... | 12 |
| eGovernment Infrastructure..... | 15 |
| eGovernment Services for Citizens..... | 17 |
| eGovernment Services for Businesses..... | 23 |

Disclaimer:

This document is not intended to be exhaustive. Its purpose is to give an overview of the general e-government situation in Bulgaria. Although every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the information herein should be treated as indicative and no responsibility for errors can be taken. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on its behalf is responsible for the use that could be made of the information provided.

Country Profile

Basic Data and Indicators

Basic data.....

Population (1.000): 7.761,0 inhabitants (2005)

GDP at market prices: 21.448,1 million Euros (2005)

GDP per inhabitant in PPS (Purchasing Power Standards, EU-25=100): 32,1 (2005)

GDP growth rate: 5,5% (2005)

Inflation rate: 5,0% (2005)

Unemployment rate: 10,1% (2005)

Government debt/GDP: 38,8% (2004)

Public balance (government deficit or surplus/GDP): 1,3% (2004)

Source: [Numerical data provided by Eurostat](#)

Area: 110.993,6 km²

Capital city: Sofia

EU Official Languages: Bulgarian

Currency: Lev

Source: [European Commission, Enlargement, Bulgaria country profile](#)

Political Structure.....

The present Constitution provides for a multi-party parliamentary system, free elections and separation among legislative, executive and judicial power.

The 240-seat unicameral National Assembly, or Parliament, is vested with the legislative power. The 240 Members of Parliament are directly elected for a 4-year term on the basis of proportional representation. The votes are for party or coalition lists of candidates for each of the twenty-eight administrative divisions. Parties and political coalitions need 4% of the popular vote to qualify. Parliament is responsible for enactment of laws, approval of the

budget, scheduling of presidential elections, selection and dismissal of the prime minister and other ministers, declaration of war, deployment of troops outside of Bulgaria, and ratification of international treaties and agreements.

The President serves as Head of State, and is directly elected every 5 years for a maximum of two-terms. The Council of Ministers (the Government), chaired by the Prime Minister, currently consists of 18 ministers. The Prime Minister is primarily nominated by the largest parliamentary group and is given a mandate by the President to form a cabinet. The most recent parliamentary elections were held on 25 June 2005 according to a proportional system with ballot lists of

parties, coalitions, and independent candidates registered in 31 multi-mandate constituencies.

The Bulgarian judicial system has a four-level court structure containing three separate instances: regional courts, district courts, appeal courts and a Supreme Court of Cassation. A Supreme Judicial Council is in charge of the self-administration and organisation of the judiciary. The Constitutional Court reviews the constitutionality of laws and statutes brought before it. Parliament elects the 12 members of the Constitutional Court by a two-thirds majority; the members serve a nine-year term.

Bulgaria is divided in 28 regions, each headed by a regional governor, who is appointed by the Government. The 263 municipalities form the basis for administrative and territorial self-government.

Current Head of State: Georgi Purvanov (President, since 22 January 2002)

Current Head of Government: Sergei Stanishev (Prime Minister, since 16 August 2005)

Information Society indicators.....

Percentage of households with Internet access: 10% (2003)

Percentage of enterprises with Internet access: 62% (2004)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet at least once a week: 13% (2005)

Percentage of households with a broadband connection: 4% (2004)

Percentage of enterprises with a broadband connection: 28% (2004)

Percentage of individuals having purchased/ordered online in the last three months: 1% (2004)

Percentage of enterprises having received orders online within the previous year: 3% (2004)

Percentage of individuals using the Internet for interacting with public authorities:

obtaining information 3,9%, downloading forms 3,4%, returning filled forms 2,6% (2004)

Percentage of enterprises using the Internet for interacting with public authorities:

obtaining information 36%, downloading forms 27%, returning filled forms 9% (2004)

Source: [Eurostat](#)

eGovernment History

Main developments and key milestones (in reverse chronological order)

For the latest developments, see: [eGovernment News - Other European countries](#)



July 2006.....

The Minister of Public Administration and Administrative Reform Nikolay Vassilev announces that following the recent eCommerce law, an **eGovernance law** is under preparation by the Ministry's team.

June 2006.....

The Bulgarian Ministry of Justice is to introduce the document management system DocuWare, under financial support by EU's Phare programme. DocuWare is to be installed at about 150 locations within Bulgaria's justice system. The goal is to integrate the Ministry of Justice and the courts, so that all locations will access one central document pool.

March 2006.....

The Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform allocates 11.5 million leva under its budget for 2006, funding projects related to the

establishment of eGovernment, as reported by Minister Nikolay Vassilev in the first session of the **Information Society Coordination Council**. During the session, chaired by the president of the [State Agency for Information Technology and Communications](#), it is announced that the implementation of the 20 indicative services as defined by the European Commission for businesses has reached 80.56%, while those for citizens – 47.06%.

January 2006.....

The training process for public administrators in IT and awareness activities across the country starts under the T-Centres project. Some 100000 civil servants are to be trained across the country as part of their preparation for the provision of eGovernment services to citizens and businesses.

December 2005.....

Bulgaria's T-Centres project receives new funding to expand IT training and awareness activities across Bulgaria's civil services. The project is part of the iCentres network, created in June 2004 with joint funding from the government and the United Nations Development Programme.

September 2005.....

The Bulgarian government establishes a new body to manage telecommunications and Information Technologies. The [State Agency for Information Technology and Communications](#) is a body directly responsible to the Council of Ministers. Until this decision, communications were part of the Ministry of Transport and Communications.

November 2004.....

The Deputy Interior Minister Boyko Kotsev announces that the future Bulgarian passport will fully comply with the EU standards for security features and biometrics. According to the [Ministry of the Interior](#), current ID cards will also be replaced by a biometric document to be launched in 2006-2007.

June 2004.....

- ▶ The iCentres network is created with joint funding from the government and the United Nations Development Programme. iCentres aims to narrow the gap between Bulgaria and the information society, and to improve the information skills of citizens and businesses in rural areas.
- ▶ The [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) and the [Internet Society of Bulgaria](#) launch a project to help municipal governments in South-Eastern Europe enhance eGovernment initiatives by using open source software (OSS) applications, with the city of Kurdjali serving as a pilot. The project is part of a larger UNDP global programme focused on developing national capacities by establishing a series of regional centres using OSS.

September 2003.....

The Bulgarian Minister for State Administration Dimitar Kalchev gives the official start-on to the delivery of electronic public services based on the country's currently built eGovernment platform. Announcing the completion of the first phase of the project, the Minister kick-started the delivery of four initial services: change of address notification, access to company registration information, information on social security instalments for individuals and check up of social contributions paid by companies. These four services are up and running, said the Minister, and at the moment they are provided free of charge.

By the end of this year and in the beginning of 2004 the Finance Ministry is to provide four more services: eContracting for low-value public tenders, submission of VAT declarations, emission of National Bank securities, and online submission of tax and statistical

information by businesses. By the end of 2005 more than 20 services will be available, including firms and vehicles registration or filing of customs declarations.

To access these new eGovernment services, individual and business users must be equipped with special smart cards containing personal electronic signatures, provided by the state-owned company [Informatsionno Obsluzhvane \(Information Services\)](#). The price for the card and a card reader is 125 Bulgarian leva (EUR 62) for citizens and 300 Bulgarian leva (EUR 149) for legal entities. So far Information Services has issued 16,000 digital signature certificates, mostly to businesses.

January 2003.....

Moving towards participation in the EU's Interchange of Data between Administrations (IDA) programme, the Bulgarian government drafts a strategy document on the implementation of a 'one-stop-shop' for citizens to access information on public services. Ministers feel that the strategy is important to make the government and its various departments more easily accessible for citizens and businesses. An inter-governmental council will monitor the implementation of the strategy that was designed with the help of specialists from NGOs, international and Bulgarian IT companies, the state administration, the media and the academy.

November 2002.....

The Bulgarian cabinet jointly signs a memorandum committing it to launching an eGovernment system by the end of 2005.

March 2001.....

The draft law on **Electronic Document and Electronic Signature** first published in April 2000 is adopted by the National Assembly on 22 March (SG 34/06.04.2001). The law takes into consideration most of the opinions, suggestions and recommendations made by the stakeholders, and Bulgarian and foreign experts.

2000 and before.....

The first eGovernment programme began in 1998 with the establishment of a Programme Council attached to the Council of Ministers. Its aim was the preparation and management of a long-term programme for effective information and management technologies and human resources development in the public sector. One goal was to interconnect ministries and other state organisations through a government-wide communications system.

The Telecommunications Act was enforced in 1998. The law envisaged liberalisation of telecommunications services and activities except for the supply of regular telephone services which were to remain a state monopoly until the end of 2002. The Act separates the functions of government from those of monitoring, regulation and control.

eGovernment Strategy

Main strategic objectives and principles

eGovernment rests high in the [List of Priorities](#) of the government. As described by the Minister of Public Administration and Administrative Reform, who is politically responsible for eGovernment: *"...One of the basic tools for carrying out this large scale organizational change is the development of the e-government. Actually, the e-services offered by the institutions at the moment in Bulgaria are insufficient in number and functionality. Our country is at one of the last places in Europe in this sphere. ...In order to realise adequate introduction of eGovernment funding to the amount of 15 million leva has been provided for the first time in the 2006 budget. ..."*

Bulgaria, which is on track to joining the European Union, having signed a Treaty of accession in April last year, has benchmarked Austria in its efforts to raise the standard and level of eGovernment services provided to its increasingly e-savvy citizens. The number of eDocuments made available to Bulgarians by public administration has increased 20-fold in the past year, according to the Minister. The government has also drafted the **eManagement legislation** aimed at helping citizens and businesses cut through red tape. According to reports, the draft was based on Austrian experience and know-how. Austria was chosen because of its similar size and population to Bulgaria.

eGovernment in Bulgaria is seen as an element of the transition from industrial to information society and is a tool to increase the competitive ability of the Bulgarian economy and to improve the whole business climate. It is a process of change whose critical factors for success may be reduced to the following five key spheres (ref: "[Development of eGovernment](#)", [Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform](#), 2006):

- ▶ Presence of political will: By the formation of the Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform (MSAAR) the administrative, resource and functional conditions have been created
- ▶ Provision of the necessary financial resources: In the draft budget 2006 significant funds to the amount of 15 million leva are provided, along with grant programs such as PHARE and local co-financing
- ▶ Intuitional provision, including management capacity, improvement of the qualification and training of the civil servants in e-government and information technologies, with the ministry already developing programmes for mass training of the civil servants e-government and IT, with special attention paid to the provision of places for public access to services, such as libraries, community centres, and a national net with near 100 remote centres
- ▶ Overall development of the information society and wider access to computers and the web through digital literacy
- ▶ Need for the development of the e-government recognised by society: Investigations carried out have indicated unbalance in the demand of e-services. The need for the development of eGovernment is recognized better by businesses than people.

Historically, the Bulgarian process of introduction of eGovernment may be divided into three stages:

- ▶ 2002 - preparatory stage, related to the adoption of strategic documents
- ▶ 2003 - 2005 - experimental stage, related to the introduction of 20 indicative e-services for the citizens and businesses defined by the European Commission, introduction of e-documents and e-signature in the work of the administration and, as a whole, work on basic, conceptual and methodological projects

- ▶ 2005 - 2008 - real stage of dynamic development, during which a re-engineering of the business processes in the administration and total introduction of e-services, including also cross-border services within the frame of the single European market will be carried out.

During the past years significant preparatory work has been performed both on central and institutional level. The administration has been supplied with hardware and software and communication connectivity, and a plan for implementation of the eGovernment Strategy (2003 - 2005) has been drawn up and followed.

The necessary environment is supplemented by suitable legislation, for example the [Law on Electronic Document and Electronic Signature](#), the availability of providers of certifying services provide the necessary environment and the **e-Governance Law**, currently under preparation.

The working group "Application of standards related to e-government" has drawn up four documents that regulate the mechanisms for achieving inter-system integration and operation compatibility of the information systems within the e-government. Moreover, the group has developed and published in Internet "Prototype of Register of Standards for e-government", comprising 108 horizontal standards.

A number of pilot projects for delivery of on-line administrative services have been implemented at central, regional and municipal level. Analysis made on progress so far has indicated problem areas such as:

- ▶ Insufficient in number and functionality services
- ▶ Lack of uniform information environment in the state administration: The information environment in the institutions is at different technological levels

and decisions in the sphere of IT in separate institutions remain uncoordinated resulting in poor compatibility and lack of integrity between electronic registers and information systems;

- ▶ Absence of service oriented integration of e-services
- ▶ Disproportionate level of development of e-services between central institutions and local administrations

The main activities for infrastructure development eGovernment in 2006 can be grouped in three main directions:

- 1. Tasks related to the development of the centralized systems for e-government.**
 - ▶ Provision of a centralised integrated information environment for services.
 - ▶ Enhancement of the eGovernment portal
 - ▶ Tasks related to the delivery of centralised services such as e-procurement, national electronic archives and registers
 - ▶ Activities related to security of centralised information and systems such as PKI and workstation-level protection
 - ▶ Tasks related to the management of the eGovernment process
- 2. Technical and methodological provision of regional and local administrations**
- 3. Training in IT in the administration and in the implementation and use of the services of e-government**

eGovernment Legal Framework

Main legal texts impacting on the development of eGovernment

eGovernment legislation.....

There is no specific legislation for the moment, but, as reported by the Minister of Public Administration and Administrative Reform (see History section), an **eGovernance law** is under preparation.

Freedom of Information legislation.....

The **Access to Public Information Act** was voted by parliament in 2000 and amended in 2003. The 2005 European Commission Monitoring Report observes that although there has been an increase in the number of decisions issued by the Bulgarian administration on the basis of this law, and its acceptance has increased, impact still remains limited. The government, in its recent (March 2006) response to the Monitoring report, intends to integrate two public registries, namely the "Registry of Administrative Structures" and that of "Acts of the Executive Authority" in a single administrative registry.

Data Protection/Privacy legislation.....

The [Law for the Protection of Personal Data](#) (last amendment SG. 43/20 May 2005) applies to the protection of individuals in processing personal data as well as to access of these data. The treatment of personal data belongs to the **eManagement legislation** recently approved by the parliament but unlikely to enter into force before the technological foundation is laid.

The latest European Commission Monitoring Report for the country observes that despite the amendments in the law, significant further alignment with the 2002 *acquis* is still required. Fields such as the automated processing of personal data, the processing of personal data for defence, national security and public order purposes, the mechanisms for adopting codes of conduct, the tasks of data controllers, the time limits to lodge complaints and the provisions concerning

notification of processing operations need attention. At this moment, Bulgaria is not completely in a position to ensure full implementation of the *acquis* in the field of protection of personal data (see also chapter 3).

eCommerce legislation.....

The Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform elaborated the draft **Law on eCommerce**, which was passed in parliament in 2006. The law implements the relevant European Directive and includes the following:

- ▶ Obligations of the service providers to provide information
- ▶ Obligations of the service providers regarding the contracts by e-devices
- ▶ Rules limiting the service providers' responsibilities, connected to the provision of access and transfer of information services
- ▶ Introduction of the "SPAM" definition and development of a specialized registry of the people, who do not wish to receive such messages.

eTaxation.....

eServices for tax belong to the **eManagement legislation** recently approved by the parliament but unlikely to enter into force before the technological foundation is laid. Tax legislation is defined in the Personal Income Tax Act (last amendment SG. 45/30 Apr 2002), the Corporate Income Act (last amendment SG. 45/30 Apr 2002), the VAT Act (last amendment SG. 45/30 Apr 2002) and the Tax Procedure Code (last amendment SG. 45/30 Apr 2002). Another series of amendments is due at the end of 2006 due to harmonisation with the EU.

According to Art.145, para.9 of the Tax Procedure Code, the tax administration has the right to announce officially names, tax numbers, personal identification

number and addresses of debtors who have not paid their liabilities within the deadline, including the amount of their arrears. The Bulletin includes summarised information from the announcements of the Territorial Tax Directorates that prominently display information about the debtors in the tax offices.

eCommunications legislation.....

The Telecommunications Act was enforced in 1998. The law envisaged liberalisation of telecommunications services and activities except for the supply of regular telephone services which were to remain a state monopoly until the end of 2002. The Act separates the functions of government from those of monitoring, regulation and control. Despite the new [Telecommunications Act](#) (2 March 2006), the latest European Commission Monitoring Report observes that little progress has been made on electronic communications and information technologies, including addressing outstanding issues related to the 1998 acquis. Alignment with the 2002 acquis remains to be achieved. It is recommended that the legislative timetable is reviewed and new plans activated in order to comply with accession deadlines.

Bulgaria has been granted a transitional arrangement until 31 December 2008 as regards implementation of number portability, required under the EC Numbering Directive. In fact, mobile number portability will be implemented on 1 January 2007 according to the new Telecommunications Act.

eSignatures/eIdentity legislation.....

Draft Law on Electronic Document and Electronic Signature were published in April 2000 in a collection Electronic Document and Electronic Signature - Legal Aspects. The [Law on Electronic Document and Electronic Signature](#), adopted by the National Assembly on March 22, 2001 (SG 34/06.04.2001) takes into consideration most of the opinions, suggestions and recommendations made by the stakeholders, and Bulgarian and foreign experts. The law regulates electronic documents, electronic signatures and terms and procedure for providing certification services.

eProcurement legislation.....

Bulgaria has adopted the necessary amendments to its Public Procurement Law and passed a new Concessions Law in line with the 2002 *acquis*.

Re-use of Public Sector Information.....

This is covered by the provisions of the Access to Public Information Act (2001, 2003).

eGovernment Actors

Main roles and responsibilities



National eGovernment.....

Policy/Strategy

Policy and strategy are determined by the [Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform](#) and its [Directorate for eGovernment](#). The Directorate issues strategic guidelines for the establishment and development of eGovernment and its components, draws up concrete plans for their implementation, including resource provision and offers guidance and control for administrations. It also supports by methodologies the units in the administration engaged in the implementation of IT and communication technologies and prepares investment programs for computerisation of state administration and implementation of IT at all levels – central, regional and municipal.

The latest European Commission Monitoring Report observes that national regulatory authorities are not properly resourced for their tasks as far as implementation of the new Telecommunications Act is concerned. It also points out that coordination between the regulatory authorities remains to be improved and calls for enhanced preparation in this area.

Coordination

The **Information Society Coordination Council** is a newly established body, whose first session was in March 2006, with the mandate to oversee progress in IT and eGovernment.

The [State Agency for Information Technology and Communications](#) is a body directly responsible to the [Council of Ministers](#), managing IT and communications. Until this decision, communications were part of the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The Agency's department of Information Society is working on several projects in cyber-security and internet governance.

The Minister of Public Administration and Administrative Reform oversees the **Coordination Center for Information, Communication and Management Technologies (CCIT)**, at www.ccit.government.bg, site with frequent connection failures), which was created in April 2002 to coordinate eGovernment activities and provide leadership across government.

Implementation, Support

Implementation and support is undertaken by private sector entities through tendering procedures.

Electronic Certification

A number of ministries and public agencies such as the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works accept and publish documents, signed by a universal digital signature, through the digital signature of the public entity or through other digital media. Valid digital documents cover most standards and de facto standards and can be delivered through e-mail and usual storage media such as floppy disks and CDs. conditions:

To access recently introduced eGovernment services, individual and business users must be equipped with special smart cards containing personal electronic signatures, provided by the state-owned company [Informacionno Obsluzhvane \(Information Services\)](#).

Audit/Assurance

According to a recent **Ordinance on the General Rules for the Organisation of Administrative Services**, adopted by the government, administrations have to use the web-based System for Self-Assessment of Administrative Services (SSAAS) to report on the state of administrative services offered. Reporting is to be six-monthly and the system is to be maintained by the Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform, under unified criteria for drafting. Within 3 months of the enforcement of the ordinance, the Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform will endorse a list of unified formulation of administrative services, aiming to facilitate the communication between different administrations. This list will be also used for various e-registers, which belong to the eGovernment infrastructure.

Data Protection

The **Commission for the Protection of Personal Data** has been established by the [Law for the Protection of Personal Data](#) (last amendment SG. 43/20 May 2005) as an independent state body carrying out protection of individuals in processing their personal data and in providing access to these data. The Commission, who is also responsible for supervising conformance with the law, is a corporate body with budget support and headquarters in Sofia.

The latest (2006) European Commission Monitoring Report for the country observes that the administrative capacity of the Data Protection Commission is still weak, which is partly caused by significant cuts in its 2006 budget. Furthermore, the Commission does not have sufficient staff, handling of complaints remains ineffective and its budgetary independence is not fully guaranteed. The report characterises the functioning of the registration and notification scheme as unsatisfactory along with the enforcement record in

general and points out that co-operation with the Ombudsman and other agencies is still insufficient.

Regional & Local eGovernment.....

Regional administrations belong to the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the **National Association of Municipalities**. They are involved in the implementation of various eGovernment activities of local interest, for example the implementation and support of the Electronic Information System for Civil Registration and Administration. So far, more than 60 local authorities implemented access to the e-service serving more than 4800000 citizens or 60 per cent of population. For example, the Stara Zagora Region and Municipality have implemented an integrated portal for services of the region and municipality: issuing of State Property Act of Real Estate, filing of complains to the Regional Department of the Ministry of Interior; issuing of copies of birth certificates, issuing of construction permits.

eGovernment Who's Who

Main eGovernment decision-makers and executives

Ministers responsible for eGovernment.....

Name: Nikolay Vassilev

Job title: Minister of State Administration and Administrative Reform

Picture:



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eGovernment Infrastructure

Main eGovernment infrastructure components



eGovernment Service Delivery.....

Following the UN classification of eServices into five stages, Bulgaria appears as having the following utilisation rates for 2005 (ref: United Nations: "Global eGovernment Readiness Report 2005"):

| Stage of eService | Percent utilisation (%) |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| I: Emerging | 88 |
| II: Enhanced | 77 |
| III: Interactive | 52 |
| IV: Transactional | 2 |
| V: Networked | 30 |
| TOTAL | 49.27 |

These rates amount to a global rank of 48 out of a total of 191 countries, placing it behind countries such as the US (1), Singapore (2) and Romania (28) and ahead of Member States such as Poland (49), Greece (50) and Portugal (66).

Network.....

The UN Telecommunication Infrastructure Index (same source as above) for 2005 amounts to 0,252, which is worldwide ahead of countries such as Romania (0,189), Brazil (0,164), Mexico (0,149) and

China (0,124) and behind Croatia ((0,302) and all the Member States.

In 2005, Bulgaria is ranked 64th in the Network Readiness Index by the World Economic Forum, while other European countries such as Hungary (38), Slovak Republic (41), Poland (53), Croatia (57) and Romania (58) are better rated. However, the share of ITC in Bulgarian economic figures is relatively high, but it is mostly driven by mobile communication and a rapidly developing market of mobile services.

Portal.....

The Bulgarian eGovernment portal is called the [eGovernment Gateway](#) and aims in a one-stop shop for all eServices offered by the administration. This has not been achieved as yet, but it is expected that a significant part will be completed before the end of the year.

e-Identification infrastructure.....

Smart cards containing personal electronic signatures can be provided by the state-owned company [Informatsionno Obsluzhvane \(Information Services\)](#).

The **Electronic Information System for Civil Registration and Administration** by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Citizen Registration Directorate General, offers services related to citizens' personal IDs, submission of data to statistical offices and Generalised data related the number of citizens residing in a given region, city or municipality. More than 60 local authorities have already implemented access to the eService reaching more than 4800000 citizens or 60 per cent of population. The highly secure part of this system stores personal data on all Bulgarian citizens, which can be accessed by government employees. Its other free public services include the "web access to election

rolls' used by citizens, who wish to check their election rolls and find their place for vote casting, as well as generalised population data provided for agencies and national organisations.

eProcurement infrastructure.....

There is no general eProcurement infrastructure but an online [Small Scale Electronic Procurement System](#) for the public sector is in operation.

Knowledge Management infrastructure

There is a **public bulletin** with information about VAT registered companies in Bulgaria. The General Tax Directorate updates the bulletin once a month with data available in the archives of the tax divisions throughout the country.

Various registries exist throughout the country, such as the Citizen Registration System (ESGRAON), but they are usually isolated. The **Register of Administrative Structures and Administrative Bodies' Acts** provides precise information and the possibility to download forms related to license and permit mechanisms of the administration, thus ensuring an improved business environment and better transparency. Also, the [National Register of Populated Places](#), developed by the National Statistical

Institute in cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, according to the Law on Administrative-territorial Structure of Republic of Bulgaria, article 37, paragraph 2, operates an experimental online service covering all administrative-territorial changes within the period 1960-2006 and part of changes up to 1960. The work is in progress.

Finally, the **BULSTAT Register**, otherwise the Unified Register for Identification of Economic and Other Subjects, has been in operation since its establishment by law in 1999 covering activity in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. The recent Law on the **Bulstat register** on 27 April 2005, and the ensuing adoption of a government strategy for the actual establishment of a central register of legal entities and of an **electronic register** of Bulgaria, aim to unify the registration of businesses with the Registry Agency under the Ministry of Justice, to turn business registration from a court procedure into a purely administrative procedure, and to introduce a **single Bulstat number** for tax and social security purposes.

eGovernment Services for Citizens

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Citizens

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services (12 for citizens, 8 for businesses) adopted by the Council of the EU in March 2001, and on the methodology used to assess their level of online availability and sophistication in the eEurope benchmarking exercises (see: [eGovernment indicators for benchmarking eEurope](#)).

The 12 services for citizens are as follows:

1. Income Tax Declaration
2. Job Searches by labour Offices
3. Social Security Contributions
4. Personal Documents
5. Car Registration
6. Application for Building Permission
7. Declaration to the Police
8. Public Libraries
9. Certificates (birth, marriage) Request and Delivery
10. Enrolment in Higher Education
11. Announcement of moving (change of address)
12. Health-related services (e.g. appointments for hospitals)

For each service, the sophistication stage reached is indicated, with reference to the maximum stage possible for the service.

- ▶ Stage 1 - Information: online information about public services
- ▶ Stage 2 - Interaction: downloading of forms
- ▶ Stage 3 - Two-way interaction: processing of forms, including authentication
- ▶ Stage 4 - Transaction: full case handling, decision and delivery (payment)

1. Income taxes (declaration, notification of assessment)

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Finance, General Tax Directorate |
| Website: | http://www.minfin.government.bg , http://www.taxadmin.minfin.bg/uslugi.php |
| Sophistication stage: | 3/4 |
| Description: | Online information and forms which can be downloaded, submitted and signed electronically. The National Revenue Agency became operational in January 2006 and has the sole responsibility for the collection of central government taxes and social security contributions. |

2. Job search services by labour offices

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, National Employment Agency |
| Website: | http://www.az.government.bg , http://www.nsz.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 2/3 |
| Description: | The National Employment Agency provides services to active job seekers such as mediation for searching jobs, guidance, qualification and motivation training, programmes and measures for employment. It also provides some services to employers. Registered job seekers are entitled to unemployment benefits and receive online job listings matching their profiles, which are directed to interested employers. |

3. Social security benefits

a. Unemployment benefits

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, National Employment Agency |
| Website: | http://www.az.government.bg , http://www.nsz.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 2/4 |
| Description: | The National Employment Agency provides those registered with the Labour Office Directorates with unemployment benefits in accordance with Chapter 4A of the Social Security Codex. Online registration and information is available. |

b. Family allowances

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, National Employment Agency |
| Website: | http://www.az.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 2/4 |
| Description: | The National Employment Agency provides registered with the Labour Office Directorates with family benefits for children in accordance to the Family Assistance for Children Act. Online registration and information is available. |

c. Medical costs (reimbursement or direct settlement)

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, National House for Health Insurance |
| Website: | www.noi.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 3/4 |
| Description: | The National Social Security Institute administers the mandatory insurance programs for disability, old age and survivors' benefits, sickness and maternity, work injuries and occupational diseases as well as collection, control and information services for all obligatory contributions. More and more citizens obtain information on their medical insurance status online. |

d. Student grants

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Education and Research |
| Website: | http://www.minedu.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Information only. |

4. Personal documents (passport and driving licence)**a. Passport**

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of the Interior, District Police Stations (Identity Documents and Passport Regime Units) |
| Website: | http://www.mvr.bg/en/guide/new_BG_documents.htm (info on ID documents) |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/3 |
| Description: | Online information only so as to start the process of obtaining an ID or passport. |

b. Driving license

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of the Interior |
| Website: | http://www.mvr.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Online information for driving licences is available but no online service or downloads. The role has been assigned to the Ministry by the Traffic Law (last amendment SG. 115/30 Dec 2004) |

5. Car registration (new, used and imported cars)

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Transport and Communications – Executive Agency: Automobile Administration (supervision and conformance control) |
| Website: | http://www.mvr.bg , www.rta.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Online information for driving licences is available but no online service or downloads. The role has been assigned to the Ministry by the Traffic Law (last amendment SG. 115/30 Dec 2004) |

6. Application for building/planning permission

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Cadastre and Property Agency, Municipalities |
| Website: | http://www.mrrb.government.bg , www.cadastre.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Building permits are issued by the Ministry and its local services departments (municipalities). Online information but no downloadable forms. Some municipalities (Stara Zagora) have implemented pilot services. |

7. Declaration to the police (e.g. in case of theft)

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of the Interior, National Police Service |
| Website: | http://www.mvr.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/3 |
| Description: | There is information but no online service at present. |

8. Public libraries (availability of catalogues and search tools)

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Public Administration and Administrative Reform |
| Website: | http://www.mc.government.bg , http://egateway.government.bg , http://www.nationallibrary.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/3 |
| Description: | The electronic catalogue of the St. St. Cyril and Methodius National Library is also accessible through the e-gateway government portal. More advanced online facilities are offered by university libraries such as the Sofia University Library . |

9. Certificates (birth, marriage): request and delivery

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Citizen Registration Directorate General |
| Website: | http://www.mrrb.government.bg , www.grao.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/3 |
| Description: | By Decree no. 154, 1992, of the Council of Ministers, the management and control of the functioning and development of the Citizen Registration System (ESGRAON) are assigned to the Directorate General "Citizen Registration" of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and to the 28 Territorial Units "Citizen Registration" located in the former administrative centres of the districts. There is online information but no downloadable forms which can be submitted. |

10. Enrolment in higher education/university

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Education and Research |
| Website: | http://www.minedu.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Online information but no registration available. |

11. Announcement of moving (change of address)

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Citizen Registration Directorate General |
| Website: | http://www.mrrb.government.bg , www.grao.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 2/3 |
| Description: | Change of address notification has been announced as available since 2003. Online notification is possible through the Electronic Information System for Civil Registration and Administration. More than 60 local authorities implemented access to the e-service serving more than 4800000 citizens or 60 per cent of population. |

12. Health related services (interactive advice on the availability of services in different hospitals; appointments for hospitals)

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Health |
| Website: | http://www.mh.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Information is available but no online forms and service. |

Source: [The online sophistication ratings are in agreement with the report 'Online Availability of Public Services: How is Europe Progressing?' carried out for the European Commission](#)

eGovernment Services for Businesses

Availability and sophistication of eServices for Businesses

The information in this section is based on the common list of 20 basic public services (12 for citizens, 8 for businesses) adopted by the Council of the EU in March 2001, and on the methodology used to assess their level of online availability and sophistication in the eEurope benchmarking exercises (see: [eGovernment indicators for benchmarking eEurope](#)).

The 8 services for businesses are as follows:

1. Social security contributions for employees
2. Corporation Tax: declaration, notification
3. VAT: declaration, notification
4. Registration of a new company
5. Submission of data to statistical offices
6. Customs declaration
7. Environment-related permits
8. Public procurement

For each service, the sophistication stage reached is indicated, with reference to the maximum stage possible for the service.

- ▶ Stage 1 - Information: online information about public services
- ▶ Stage 2 - Interaction: downloading of forms
- ▶ Stage 3 - Two-way interaction: processing of forms, including authentication
- ▶ Stage 4 - Transaction: full case handling, decision and delivery (payment)

1. Social contribution for employees

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, National Social Insurance Institute, General Tax Directorate |
| Website: | http://www.noi.bg , http://www.taxadmin.minfin.bg/uslugi.php |
| Sophistication stage: | 3/4 |
| Description: | The National Social Insurance Institute is one of the leading institutions in e-services. Last year, the social insurance declarations filed in an electronic way amounted to 1659904, while the number of the contracts of employment 188715. More and more citizens obtain information on their medical insurance status online. Contributions by employers can also be filed electronically through the Tax Directorate web pages. |

2. Corporation tax: declaration, notification

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Finance, General Tax Directorate |
| Website: | http://www.minfin.government.bg , http://www.taxadmin.minfin.bg/uslugi.php |
| Sophistication stage: | 3/4 |
| Description: | Online information and forms, which can be downloaded, submitted and signed electronically. |

3. VAT: declaration, notification

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Finance, General Tax Directorate |
| Website: | http://www.minfin.government.bg , http://www.taxadmin.minfin.bg/uslugi.php |
| Sophistication stage: | 3/4 |
| Description: | Online information and forms, which can be downloaded, submitted and signed electronically. A public bulletin updated once a month contains information about VAT registered companies in Bulgaria. Information in the bulletin is derived from data available in the archives of the General Tax Directorate and its regional offices throughout the country. The number of VAT declarations filed in 2005 is 642343. |

4. Registration of a new company

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Justice, Registry Agency |
| Website: | http://www.registryagency.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | Pursuant to the Law on the Trade Register, the trade registration will change its nature from judicial into administrative. An up-to-date centralised e-register system for servicing the central public trade register is to be operational by 1 January 2007, in line with the requirements of the First Company Law Directive, which provides for the binding introduction of e-registration by that date. The business registration reform has continued and a new Commercial Register Law was adopted in March 2006. The law foresees that business registration will be taken out of the courts and be turned into a purely administrative procedure. The new law still needs to be fully implemented. No online registration at present, although forms and information are available. |

5. Submission of data to statistical offices

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, National Statistical Institute |
| Website: | http://www.nsi.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 2/3 |
| Description: | There are online submission facilities for companies through forms. |

6. Customs declarations

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Finance, National Customs Agency |
| Website: | http://www.minfin.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 2/4 |
| Description: | The National Customs Agency operates under the Customs Act (last amendment SG. 110/21 Dec 2001) and the Regulation for the Implementation of the Customs Act. There are model forms to download and be submitted. The Agency is actively promoting the use of simplified procedures, in particular through its website and by liaising with business operators. Sustained efforts are being made to reinforce post-clearance controls. |

7. Environment-related permits (incl. reporting)

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Environment and Waters |
| Websites: | http://www.moew.government.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 1/4 |
| Description: | According to the Environmental Protection Act (State Gazette No 91/25.09.2002), permits should be obtained according to use and risk presented to the environment. Integrated permits covering construction as well as environmental provisions may be given for industrial installations. Online information is available along with some documents which can be downloaded. |

8. Public procurement

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Responsibility: | Central Government, Ministry of Finance, Small Scale Public Procurement |
| Website: | http://smallsrv.minfin.bg |
| Sophistication stage: | 3/4 |
| Description: | There is an online site for small value electronic procurement of the public sector, which also covers e-contracting, but no general online facility for all. |

Source: [The online sophistication ratings are in agreement with the report 'Online Availability of Public Services: How is Europe Progressing?' carried out for the European Commission](#)

European Commission - IDABC eGovernment Observatory

The eGovernment Observatory is an information tool on eGovernment developments across Europe. It provides decision-makers and professionals with information resources and insight into strategies, initiatives and projects in Europe and beyond.

The eGovernment Observatory is an IDABC project. IDABC is the European Commission programme that promotes the delivery of e-government services in the EU

The eGovernment factsheets are one of the observatory services. They present an overview of the eGovernment situation and progress in European countries. The factsheets are updated every six months.

<http://ec.europa.eu/idabc/egovo>

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