

# Moving to Bulgaria Your Relocation Guide



By Appointment To  
Her Majesty The Queen  
Removals and Storage Contractor Abels

# ABELS™

THE ART OF MOVING

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Memb No: A001



FS 23942



198656



TELEPHONE:	Country code (359) + Area code
STANDARD TIME:	GMT +2 hours (Daylight saving time from March – Oct)
WEIGHTS & MEASURES:	Metric
ELECTRICITY:	230 volts AC, 50Hz. Plugs are two-pin.
INOCULATIONS/VACCINATIONS:	Hepatitis A, Typhoid, Hepatitis B, Tetanus-Diphtheria, measles-mumps-rubella, polio and varicella immunizations
PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:	Jan 1, Mar 3, 25, May 1, 3, 6, 24, Sep 6, 22, Nov 1, Dec 24-26, 31
OFFICE HOURS:	Monday – Saturday 9am – 1am and 2pm – 7pm
BANK HOURS:	Monday – Friday 8am – 12 noon
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS:	Police 166, Health 150, Fire 160
BULGARIAN EMBASSY:	Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria 186-188 Queens Gate, London SW7 5HL, UK Tel: 020 7581 3144 Fax: (020) 7584 4948 Website: <a href="http://ukinbulgaria.fco.gov.uk/en/">http://ukinbulgaria.fco.gov.uk/en/</a> Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0900-1800 (general enquiries). Visa section: Tel: (09065) 540 819 Fax: (09065) 540 819 E-mail: <a href="mailto:consul@bulgarianembassy.org.uk">consul@bulgarianembassy.org.uk</a>
BRITISH EMBASSY IN BULGARIA:	British Embassy Moskovska Street Sofia 1000 Tel: (359) (2) 933 9222 Web: <a href="http://ukinbulgaria.fco.gov.uk/en/">http://ukinbulgaria.fco.gov.uk/en/</a>
TOURIST & TRAVEL INFORMATION:	National Tourist Information Centre 1 Sveta Nedelia Square, Sofia 1000, Bulgaria Tel: (2) 987 9778 Fax: (2) 989 6939 E-mail: <a href="mailto:webmaster@bulgariatravel.org">webmaster@bulgariatravel.org</a> Website: <a href="http://www.bulgariatravel.org">www.bulgariatravel.org</a>

## Customs

**Bulgaria is part of the EU and as such, no official documents are required for personal effects and household goods if originating from another EU country. If however your effects originate from outside the EU then the following applies.**

It is probable that Import Duty, VAT and excise be applied for importing of Household goods and cars. Import duty is applied at customs discretion and is based on your supplied documents of inventory, valued declaration and length and reason for stay abroad. The final decision will be made by the customs chief in most cases tax of 5 – 20% and VAT 20% applies.

For additional information please see website [www.customs.bg](http://www.customs.bg)

## Household Goods

### Shipments from EU countries in containers

#### Countries in containers

Documents required:

- Original T2L issued by Customs at country of origin
- Airway bill with written STATUS C in the SCI cell
- Copy of passport
- Address registration

Duty free entry.

Excise goods will pay excise to Customs.

T2L must be stamped at Customs from Origin country.

Alcohol, drugs and food not allowed.

### Shipments from Non-EU countries for foreign citizens

Documents required:

- Power of attorney legalised by a Bulgarian notary
- Declaration for the value of the goods / car legalised by a Bulgarian notary
- Copy of all pages of international passport
- Copy of card for temporary residence with address registration
- Proof for living / working abroad at least 12 consecutive months
- Pro-forma invoice including INCO delivery terms Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) destination
- Letter / contract from employer in Bulgaria
- Packing list including all items with serial numbers
- Air tickets showing return to Bulgaria

Duty free import is granted only at Regional Customs Office, taking in consideration the address, shown on Customers BG ID card.

In case such card has not been obtained yet, refundable deposit in favour of Customs will be required.

Declared value normally to be EUR 1 per 1 kg + invoice for transport.

## FORBIDDEN

- Alcohol
- Tobacco

Duty free procedure is available in case Bulgarian ID card is already issued. If not deposit in favour of customs should be made. Such deposit shall be refundable after presence of ID card to Customs authorities (not later than six months after import).

## Diplomats

Documents required:

- Diplomatic card
- “Request for Import” form stamped by Foreign Ministry Protocol
- Packing list including all items with serial numbers
- Letter of authorisation

Duty free entry.

Import of car can be requested only after Diplomatic card is obtained.

Diplomatic card to be obtained by respective Embassy. It takes approximately 1 month to obtain the card from Foreign Ministry.

Import of liquor should be requested by the Embassy to Foreign Ministry and Foreign Ministry will allow or not certain quota to be imported duty free.

## Returning Bulgarian Citizens

Documents required:

- Power of attorney legalised by a Bulgarian notary
- Copy of Bulgarian ID card
- Declaration for the value of the goods / car legalised by a Bulgarian notary
- Pro-forma invoice including INCO delivery terms, Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) destination
- Statement for permanent residency intention
- Packing list including all items with serial numbers
- Proof of living / working abroad for at least twelve consecutive months prior to arrival
- Air tickets showing return to Bulgaria.
- Sometimes Customs may ask for a certificate from the Immigration Police to show entries into the country from the past

Duty free import is granted only at Regional Customs Office, taking in consideration the address, shown on Customers BG ID card.

Duty free Import is granted within 12 months, following the date of arrival to Bulgaria.



Household goods must have been in Customer's possession for at least six months prior to the date of arrival back to Bulgaria.

## **FORBIDDEN**

- Alcohol
- Tobacco

Several shipments are allowed, within twelve months period, following the date of return, only in case such intention is declared within first shipment customs clearance.

## **Privately Owned Vehicles (POVs)**

Documents required:

- Full documentation of the vehicle such as registration certificate, title of vehicle, invoice of purchase
- In case no data is included in vehicle's title about engine power, measurements or any other details that are required by BG Customs Authorities, they may require a certificate from the official dealer in Bulgaria

Homologation Certificate.

POV is cleared only at specific Customs offices and this creates a problem for the household goods loaded in the same container.

Normally transit clearance requires additional financial coverage of the Customs transit operation.

## **Electrical Appliances**

A complete list is required.

Separate list including the serial numbers and brands of all electric articles.

## **Electronic Articles**

A complete list is required.

Separate list including the serial numbers and brands of all electronic articles.

## **Alcohol, Wine and Perfume**

Permitted only up to two bottles of wine and one bottle of liquor and up to 50ml of perfume.

## **Domestic Pets**

Documents required:

- Valid passport
- Dog must be at least four months old
- Must have rabies vaccination not over six months
- Identification chip
- Veterinary / Health certificate is required

## **Plants**

Documents required:

- Phytosanitary certificate
- Certificates for plants, potted flowers if any

## **Restricted Items**

Prohibited importation

The following are restricted items:

- Drugs
- Firearms
- Alcoholic beverages
- Tobacco & tobacco products up to 200 cigarettes
- Pornographic materials

## **Wood Packaging**

Bulgaria adopted the ISPM 15 to standardise the treatment of wood used for transport of goods.

## **General Information on the Republic of Bulgaria**

### **Background**

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

### **Geography**

The Republic of Bulgaria is in South Eastern Europe and is bordered by Turkey, Greece, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Romania and the Black Sea.

Sofia is the capital city of Bulgaria. Other important cities are Plovdiv, Varna, Bourgas, Rousse, Stara Zagora, Pleven, Dobrich, Sliven and Shumen.

Bulgaria's terrain is mountainous. The River Danube flows along Bulgaria's border with Romania. Other rivers include the Iskur, Maritsa, Mesta and Strouma.



## Climate

The weather is temperate, cold damp winters and hot dry summers.

## Population

Estimated at 7,385,000.

## Environmental Current Issues

There is air pollution from industrial emissions, rivers are polluted from raw sewage, heavy metals, detergents, deforestation, forest damage from air pollution and resulting acid rain, soil contamination from heavy metals from metallurgical plants and industrial wastes.

## Currency

1 lev = 100 stotinki

Banknotes: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50

Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100

## Economy

Bulgaria, a former Communist country that entered the EU on 1 January 2007, averaged more than 6% annual growth from 2004 to 2008, driven by significant amounts of bank lending, consumption, and foreign direct investment. Successive governments have demonstrated a commitment to economic reforms and responsible fiscal planning, but the global downturn sharply reduced domestic demand, exports, capital inflows, and industrial production. GDP contracted by 5.5% in 2009, stagnated in 2010, despite a significant recovery in exports, and grew approximately 2.2% in 2011. Despite having a favourable investment regime, including low, flat corporate income taxes, significant challenges remain. Corruption in public administration, a weak judiciary, and the presence of organized crime continue to hamper the country's investment climate and economic prospects.

## Education

Basic education comprises of two stages: basic education first stage from form I to form IV and basic education second stage from form V to form VII. School children who have successfully completed the first stage of basic education are awarded a Form IV Leaving Certificate. Completion of basic education is attested by a final certificate for the completion of basic education at the end of form VIII. Upper secondary education lasts for four or five years after completion of the basic education course and is provided in three types of schools: comprehensive (general secondary) schools, profile-oriented schools, vocational (technical and vocational-technical) schools. Studies lead to the Diploma za Zavurcheno Sredno Obrazovanie and to a certificate of professional qualification awarded by professional schools.

Higher education is provided by universities, institutes and academies. Higher education is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. Some universities are private. Education is based on the Law on Higher Education

(1995) and the Law on Scientific Degrees and Scientific Titles (latest amendments 1996). Post-secondary institutions have academic autonomy. In 1995, the National Assembly approved five new private higher education institutions.

## Religion

Bulgarian Orthodox 82.6%, Muslim 12.2%, other Christian 1.2% other 4%.

## Health

Facilities in most Bulgarian hospitals are basic and old-fashioned compared to those in the UK. Standards of medical care are acceptable, although specialized equipment / treatment may not be available, and most hospital staff are unlikely to speak English.

Although some initial emergency medical treatment may be given free in Bulgaria, British citizens are likely to be charged for the majority of medical expenses incurred whilst there (including tests and investigations, medication and overnight stays in hospital, whether state or private). It is strongly recommended that you take out comprehensive travel insurance to cover the full period you will be in the country, including Medivac to the UK if necessary. You should take with you your NHS medical card. Medicines supplied by public pharmacies have to be paid for in any event.

*Although every care is taken to ensure that all information in the Abels Relocation Guide is accurate and up to date Abels cannot accept liability for any inaccuracy.*