

TIMS Midterm Tour Bulgaria - Useful Information

15 Things You Need to Know Before Visiting Bulgaria

<https://travellingbuzz.com/things-you-need-to-know-before-visiting-bulgaria/>

Currency

The official currency in Bulgaria is the **Bulgarian lev**. The exchange rate to the Euro is **approximately 2:1** (2 **Bulgarian levs** equal **one euro**).

Money can be exchanged at bank offices or at exchange bureaus (we recommend checking if a bureau takes a commission for the exchange, as well as the percentage). ATMs can be used with most credit and debit cards. Most shops accept card payment but still there are exceptions. The current exchange rate can be found on the [website of the Bulgarian National Bank](#).

Public transport

Sofia (the capital of Bulgaria) has a well-developed public transport system, which includes two underground lines, trams, buses and trolley busses.

Metro line 2 (blue) runs from Sofia Airport to the city centre (Terminal 2- Serdika Station).

Bus line 84 also runs from Sofia Airport to the city centre (Terminal 2 > Terminal 1 > Centre: General Gurko bus stop), as well as bus line 184 (Terminal 1 > Centre: General Gurko bus stop).

The price of a ticket is 1,60 lev. A ticket is valid for a single trip. It can be bought from the driver, from a ticket machine inside the vehicle or from newspaper kiosks at bus stops. There are different tickets for buses and for the underground. For 12 lev you can buy a talon of 10 tickets for the on-ground and a travel card for 10 trips for the underground. A daily travel card for all public transport costs 4 lev. Bear in mind that you have to validate your ticket by perforating it on trams, trolleys and buses and by marking it on the electronic system in the underground. The fine for travelling without a valid ticket is 40 levs. More information on public transport schedules, routes and prices can be found on the websites of the [Urban Mobility Centre](#) and [Metropolitan](#).

If you prefer traveling by taxi, we recommend asking for assistance at the reception of your hotel.

Sofia is connected to other cities by [rail](#) and [bus transport](#).

Taxis

There are many private taxi companies in Sofia. The price for a journey from Sofia Airport to the city centre should not exceed 20 levs. However, there might be some changes due to the unpredictable price of gas/petrol. We recommend the services of **OK Supertrans** company, which works in partnership with Sofia airport. You can book a taxi at their offices in the arrival halls at Terminals 1 and 2. For more information visit [OK Supertrans website](#).

IMPORTANT: We recommend avoiding taxi services offered outside the company offices or in front of the airport terminal because of the risk of scams.

Time zone

Eastern European time - **GMT+2** with summer time **GMT +3**. There are no different time zones within the country.

Phone country code

For Bulgaria dial 00359 or +359

Power

Voltage: 220V

Frequency: 50Hz

Type F with two round pins

Traffic

Vehicles in Bulgaria drive on the right side of the road. The speed limit is 50 km/h in populated areas, 90 km/h outside populated areas and 140 km/h on motorways. For more detailed information go to [Road safety rules at the EU Commission website](#).

Emergency numbers

Number **112** is the universal European phone number for ambulance, police and fire brigade.

Language

The official language in Bulgaria is Bulgarian. English and Russian are widely spoken, French and German to a lesser degree. Bulgarian is an Indo-European Language of the South Slavonic group of languages. The alphabet is Cyrillic. For more information visit the [Bulgarian Language and the Cyrillic section](#).

Working hours

Shops in Sofia open about 8-9 AM and close about 8PM; some small shops may be open as late as 10 PM. There are convenience stores open 24/7. Most shopping malls are open until 22:00.

Pharmacies are open daily between 8:00 and 20:00

24 h pharmacies in central Sofia

Avocado Pharmacy at 56, Patriarh Evtimii Str., tel. + 359 2 4818888

Aronia 2001 Pharmacy at 6, Pencho Slaveikov Bld., tel. +359 2 9531308

Avicena pharmacy at 2, Constantine Irechek Str., tel. +359 2 9549635

Smoking

Smoking in public places is allowed only in designated areas.

Internet

Many public places in Sofia offer free wireless Internet, almost every restaurant and bar provides free Wi-Fi connection.

Climate

Bulgaria is situated in the temperate-continental climate zone and the weather conditions vary from season to season. The average winter temperature is around minus 10 and sometimes they go down to minus 20. Cold weather is often accompanied by heavy snowfall. Summers are hot with average

temperatures of over 30, which can go up to 40 in the hot months of July and August. Spring and Autumn are both mild, often with rain. Up-to-date weather forecast for Sofia and Bulgaria can be found on the [website of the National Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences](#).

Discover Bulgaria with these videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Jen0xARe-Q

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o84aPJFmVr4>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyquCtjZU_M -

About Open-Air Museum **Etar**: www.etar.bg