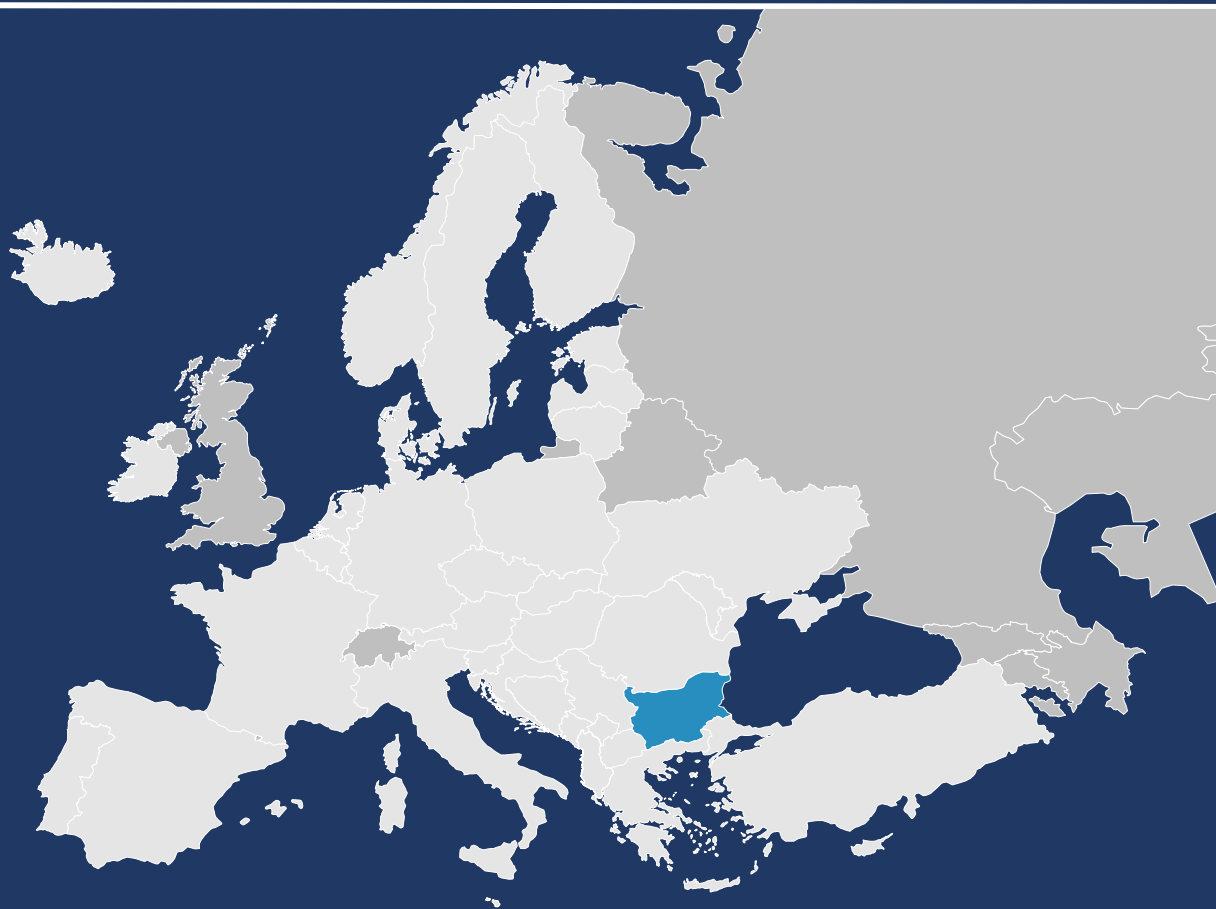


# BULGARIA

## 2024 Digital Public Administration Factsheet

Supporting document





Main developments in digital  
public administrations and  
interoperability

JULY 2024

# Table of Contents

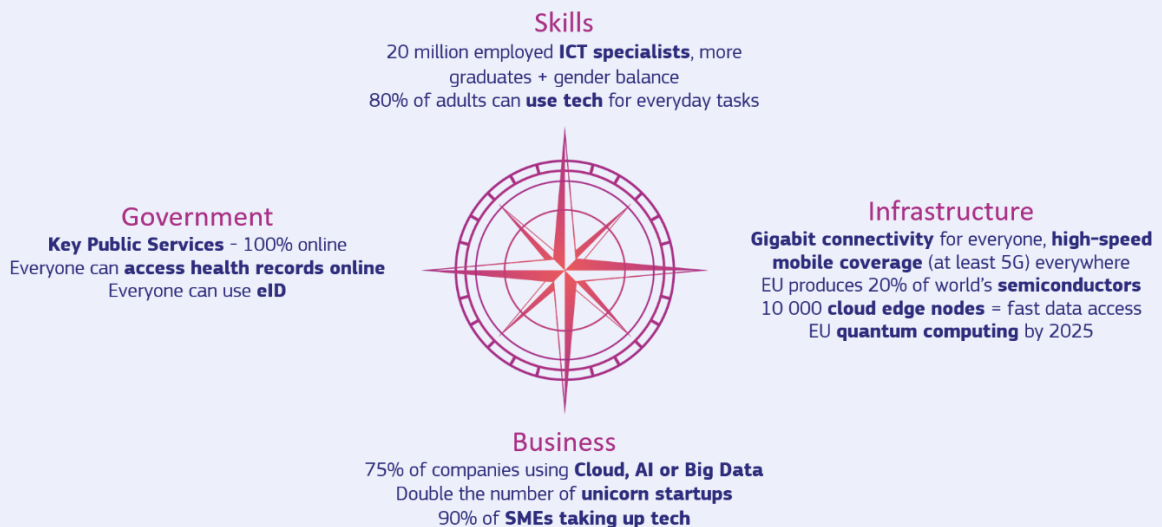
1.	Interoperability State-of-Play .....	3
2.	Digital Transformation of Public Administrations .....	6
3.	Interoperability and Data .....	10
4.	Digital Transformation of Public Services .....	18
5.	Trust and Cybersecurity.....	24
6.	Innovative Technologies .....	28
7.	Digital Public Administration Governance .....	32
8.	Cross border Digital Public Administration Services for Citizens and Businesses .....	35

Icons Glossary		
<i>Political Communication</i>	<i>Legislation</i>	<i>Infrastructure</i>
		

## 2030 DIGITAL DECADE

The **Digital Decade policy programme 2030** sets out digital ambitions for the next decade in the form of clear, concrete targets. The main goals can be summarised in 4 points:

- 1) a digitally skilled population and highly skilled digital professionals;
- 2) secure and sustainable digital infrastructures;
- 3) digital transformation of businesses;
- 4) digitalisation of public services.



The production of the **Digital Public Administration factsheets and their supportive documents** support the objectives and targets of the Digital Decade programme. By referencing national initiatives on the digital transformation of public administrations and public services, as well as interoperability, they complement existing data and indicators included in the Digital Decade reports and related resources. They also highlight and promote key initiatives put in place or planned by EU countries to reach the Digital Decade's targets.



# 1. Interoperability State-of-Play

In 2017, the European Commission published the [European Interoperability Framework \(EIF\)](#) to give specific guidance on how to set up interoperable digital public services through a set of 47 recommendations divided in three pillars. The EIF Monitoring Mechanism (MM) was built on these pillars to evaluate the level of implementation of the framework within the Member States. The mechanism is based on a set of 91 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) clustered within the three scoreboards (Principles, Layers, Conceptual model and Cross-border interoperability), outlined below.

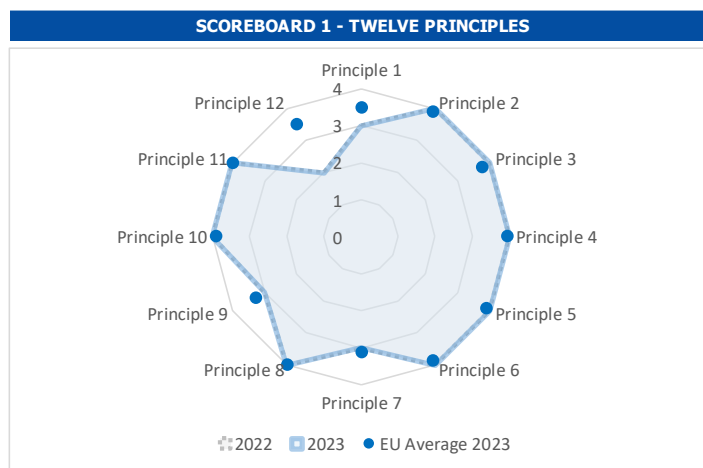
Starting from the 2022 edition, an additional scoreboard, Scoreboard 4, focusing on cross-border interoperability, has been incorporated. This scoreboard assesses the adherence to 35 Recommendations outlined in the EIF framework. Specifically, it encompasses Interoperability Principles 2, and 4 through 11 from Scoreboard 1, all recommendations pertaining to Interoperability Layers from Scoreboard 2, as well as Conceptual Model recommendations 36 to 43 and 46 to 47 from Scoreboard 3.

Scoreboard 1 Interoperability Principles		Scoreboard 2 Interoperability Layers		Scoreboard 3 Conceptual Model	
	Recommendation(s) n°		Recommendation(s) n°		Recommendation(s) n°
Principle 1 - Subsidiarity and Proportionality	1	Interoperability Governance	20-24	Conceptual Model	34-35
Principle 2 - Openness	2-4	Integrated Public Service Governance	25-26	Internal information sources and services	36
Principle 3 - Transparency	5	Legal Interoperability	27	Basic Registries	37-40
Principle 4 - Reusability	6-7	Organisational Interoperability	28-29	Open Data	41-43
Principle 5 - Technological neutrality and data portability	8-9	Semantic Interoperability	30-32	Catalogues	44
Principle 6 - User-centricity	10-13	Technical Interoperability	33	External information sources and services	45
Principle 7 - Inclusion and accessibility	14			Security and Privacy	46-47
Principle 8 - Security and privacy	15				
Principle 9 - Multilingualism	16				
Principle 10 - Administrative simplification	17				
Principle 11 - Preservation of information	18				
Principle 12 - Assessment of Effectiveness and Efficiency	19				

Scoreboard 4 Cross-border Interoperability

Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

Each scoreboard breaks down the results into thematic areas (i.e. principles). The thematic areas are evaluated on a scale from one to four, where one means a lower level of implementation and four means a higher level of implementation. The graphs below show the result of the EIF MM data collection exercise for Bulgaria in 2023, comparing it with the EU average as well as the performance of the country in 2022.

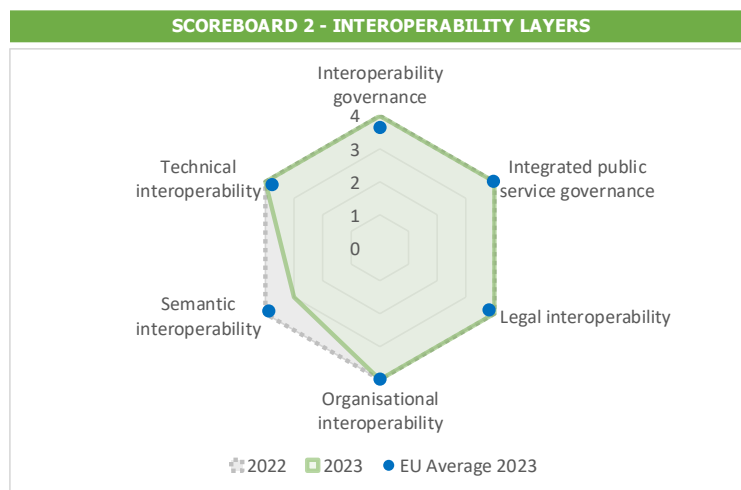


Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

Bulgaria's performance in Scoreboard 1 indicates a generally strong adherence to the EIF Principles, matching the European average for the majority of principles, specifically 10 out of 12 principles. While Bulgaria's performance aligns closely with the European average, the Recommendation 1 (Principle 1 - Subsidiarity and Proportionality) and Recommendation 19 (Principle 12 - Assessment of Effectiveness and Efficiency) still lag behind the European average,

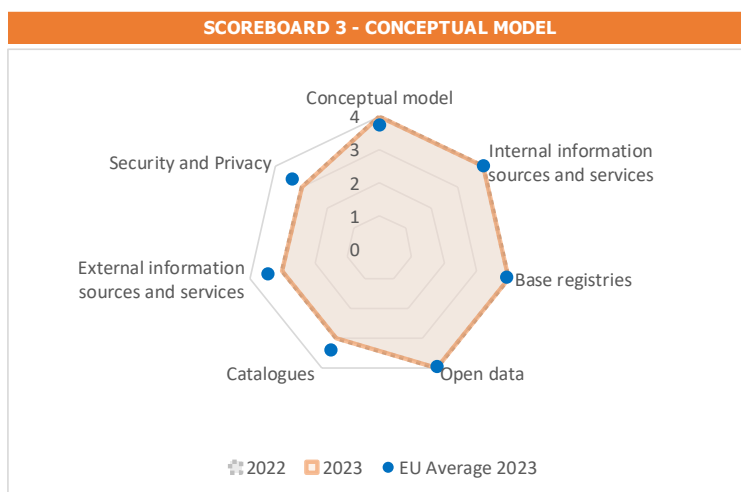


presenting opportunities for further enhancement. Therefore, the country could further ensure that the national interoperability frameworks and interoperability strategies are aligned with the EIF and tailor and extend them to address the national context and needs (Recommendation 1). Furthermore, Bulgaria could also put additional effort in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of different interoperability solutions and technological options considering user needs, proportionality and balance between costs and benefits (Recommendation 19).



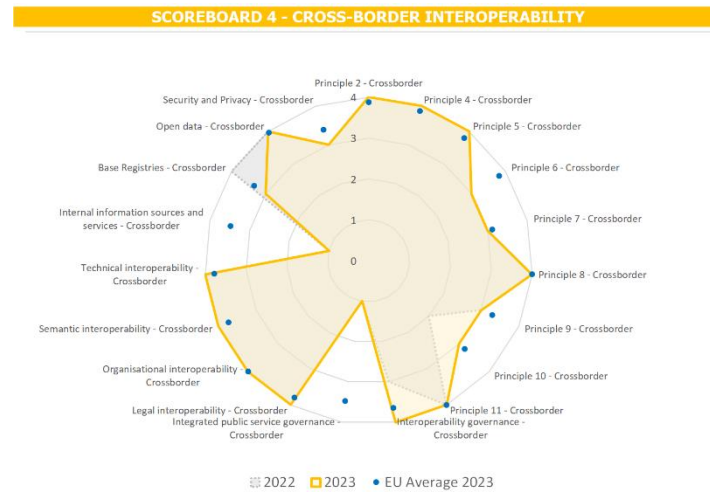
Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

The Bulgarian results for the implementation of interoperability layers assessed for Scoreboard 2 shows an overall high performance, scoring 4, and at the European average, in the majority of layers. However, in the Semantic Interoperability layer, Bulgaria's performance has declined compared to the previous year, resulting in a lower position relative to the European average. Such reduction will need to be further monitored with the results of 2024. Notwithstanding, shows Bulgaria has margins for further improvement in relation to how the country perceives data and information as a public asset (Recommendation 30).



Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

Bulgaria's scores for the Conceptual Model in Scoreboard 3 indicate strong performance across all seven indicators, with alignment to the EU average observed in four of them. However, there are areas for improvement in three indicators, namely catalogues, external information sources and services, and security and privacy. Specifically, enhancing Bulgaria's score could involve establishing catalogues for public services, public data, and interoperability solutions, while adopting common models for their description (Recommendation 44). Additionally, leveraging external information sources and services in the development of European public services, where feasible, could further enhance performance (Recommendation 45). Moreover, Bulgaria has room to improve in utilizing trust services in accordance with the Regulation on eID and Trust Services, which serve as mechanisms for ensuring secure and protected data exchange in public services (Recommendation 47).



Source: European Interoperability Framework Monitoring Mechanism 2023

Bulgaria's performance in Cross-border Interoperability, as depicted in Scoreboard 4, reflects at least an upper-middle level of performance across 12 indicators. Notably, Bulgaria excels with a maximum score of four in Principles 2 and 4 (Openness and Cross-border Reusability), as well as in legal, semantic, and technical interoperability (Recommendations 27, 31, and 33). However, there remains room for improvement in three indicators where the country scores low. Efforts could be directed towards establishing interoperability agreements across all layers, supplemented by operational agreements and change management procedures (Recommendation 26). Additionally, focus on developing a shared infrastructure of reusable services and information sources accessible to all public administrations (Recommendation 36) could further enhance Bulgaria's performance in this domain.

Additional information on Bulgaria's results on the EIF Monitoring Mechanism is available online through interactive dashboards.

#### **Curious about the state-of-play on digital public administrations in this country?**

Please find here some relevant indicators and resources on this topic:

- [Eurostat Information Society Indicators](#)
- [Digital Economy and Society Index \(DESI\)](#)
- [eGovernment Benchmark](#)
- [Repository of good practices on the EIF implementation](#)



## 2. Digital Transformation of Public Administrations

### Main Digital Strategies, Action Plans and Legislations



#### Digital Transformation of Bulgaria for the Period 2020–2030

On 5 March 2024, the Digital Decade Council, which is the consultative body the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria, approved the draft of the updated national strategy document 'Digital Transformation of Bulgaria for the Period 2024–2030'. This document includes the National Digital Decade strategic roadmap, the Digital transformation analysis and the National projected trajectories for the digital targets. The draft document is expected to be adopted by the Council of Ministers by the end of March 2024. The document updated the national strategy titled 'Digital Transformation of Bulgaria for the Period 2020–2030', which paved the way for the digital transformation of Bulgaria during the current decade. The document identifies digital transformation as an important process to create the conditions to foster growth and innovation and improve the outlook of the job market, while providing citizens with high living standards.

The Digital Transformation of Bulgaria relies upon five key principles:

- A user-oriented approach and access to all digital services;
- Ethical and socially responsible access, use, sharing and management of data;
- Cyber security by design;
- Technology as a key factor; and
- Cooperation with multiple stakeholders.

The updated national strategy document also sets six main objectives to be achieved within the current decade:

- Increasing the level of digital skills and competences as a prerequisite to accelerate the digital transformation process;
- Deploying a secure digital infrastructure;
- Digitisation of enterprises in favour of a circular and low-carbon economy;
- Increasing the efficiency of State administration and the quality of public services;
- Strengthening capacity for research and innovation; and
- Unlocking the potential of data.



#### Updated National Broadband Infrastructure Plan for Next Generation Access 'Connected Bulgaria'

On 6 August 2020, the Council of Ministers adopted, with Decision No. 555, the updated National Broadband Infrastructure Plan for Next Generation Access 'Connected Bulgaria'. The updated plan identifies the steps to be taken to setup the infrastructure necessary for the operation of various digital services. The measures envisage improving access to high-speed internet in sparsely populated regions as well as developing high-speed mobile internet across the country. Investments in the introduction of fifth-generation mobile networks are of key importance for the digitalisation of the Bulgarian economy and public services. Furthermore, the updated plan sets out the need for targeted investments in technological development, the completion of the necessary infrastructure, a secure network and information security.

The main priority areas of the plan Connected Bulgaria are:

- An ultra-high-speed infrastructure – creating conditions for the deployment of networks with very large capacity;
- A broadband infrastructure – accelerating the construction of a broadband infrastructure, accounting for the needs of the State administration;
- The effective use of radio frequency spectrum – creating the conditions for building a new-generation network;
- The maintenance of coverage in settlements located in peripheral, scarcely populated, and rural areas;
- The promotion of the use of digital technologies by providing free internet access; and
- Network security.



## National Programme 'Digital Bulgaria 2025'

The National Programme 'Digital Bulgaria 2025 and the Roadmap of 2023 for its implementation' were adopted by Decision No. 730 of the Council of Ministers on 5 December 2019.

The programme is a continuation of the National Programme 'Digital Bulgaria 2015', building both on its achievements and on the new European strategic and programming guidelines to achieve a smart, sustainable and inclusive digital growth by 2025. Digital Bulgaria 2025 aims to modernise and foster the implementation of intelligent IT solutions in all areas of the economy and social life by creating an environment for the widespread use of information and communication technologies, new technologies for businesses and citizens, uniform standards and a high level of network and information security and interoperability. It sets out the objectives, measures and activities related to the development and widespread use of ICT and the commitment of the different institutions within their sectoral policies.

Six key priority areas for action have been identified in order to achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive digital growth in the period up to 2025:

- The establishment of appropriate conditions for the development and accessibility of digital networks and services;
- The development of a dynamic and innovative digital economy and the promotion of its growth potential;
- The enhancement of digital competences and skills;
- The establishment of effective and high-quality public eServices for businesses, citizens and government;
- The promotion of a secure cyber ecosystem by addressing the challenges of cybersecurity; and
- Internet governance.

Reports on the implementation of the National Programme 'Digital Bulgaria 2025' are published regularly and the respective [national roadmap](#) leading up to 2025 has been updated.



## Strategy for the Development of eGovernment in the Republic of Bulgaria 2019–2025

In line with the European framework and with the principles for the implementation of the eGovernance policy, the Republic of Bulgaria has updated its vision and policy set out in the Strategy for the Development of eGovernment in the Republic of Bulgaria 2014–2020 and has extended the time horizon for its implementation.

The [updated strategy](#) was adopted in 2019. It ensures the implementation of the current European eGovernment principles introduced at national level and builds on the achievement of the goals beyond 2018. The document serves as a framework for the elaboration of strategies by policy areas. It also outlines the strategic framework for the definition of goals and activities for the central and territorial administration, with the aim of building digital public institutions and consumer-oriented electronic administrative services, covering both public service providers and public service organisations.

The objective is to achieve the complete transformation of administration and public institutions into digital and user-oriented electronic administrative services.

The [Updated Roadmap for the Period 2019–2023](#) includes priority measures, responsible institutions and funding sources for the implementation of the strategy. The roadmap has taken a new approach, incorporating measures in the area of justice in order to ensure interoperability, overcoming critical factors and achieving effective and transparent eGovernance. A concept for a register reform was adopted as an annex to the strategy. The concept defines goals, principles, scope, reform stages and measures of the existing model.

On 2 April 2021, the Council of Ministers with Decision No. 298 adopted a new [updated Strategy for the Development of eGovernment in the Republic of Bulgaria by 2025](#). In line with the development trends for the new decade, a leading priority has been identified in the digital transformation of the public sector, with a special focus on data that are defined as key capital for society. The availability of ever more digital data and the improvement of the way they are managed and used are essential in addressing the challenges affecting the demographic and socio-economic spheres, as well as climate and the environment, so as to contribute to a healthier, more prosperous and more sustainable society. The huge potential of data for implementing the digital transformation of the public sector in Bulgaria, and the creation of innovative public services for citizens and businesses in the country, are brought to the fore. The goal is to unlock the potential of data for the achievement of a sustainable digital transformation of the State administration in the Republic of Bulgaria by 2025.







## Architecture of eGovernment

The architecture of the electronic government is an integral element of the eGovernment policy implementation, as defined in the Electronic Government Development Strategy of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Electronic Government Act. The main principle underlying and enabling its implementation is an efficient coordination between all stakeholders.

The architecture of the electronic government in Bulgaria, approved by Order No. DAEU-5040 of 11 April 2019 of the Head of the State eGovernment Agency, and developed by the State eGovernment Agency (SEGA) aims to achieve the following goals:

- Digital transformation of civil services;
- Mandatory use of horizontal systems and shared resources of eGovernment by the administrative bodies;
- Setting mechanisms for the implementation, coordination and control of the architecture;
- Applying unified standards and the principle of interoperability in designing, building, further developing and implementing IT solutions;
- Determining the players in the electronic government, their functions, the principles of eGovernment, system requirements and technological architecture;
- Establishing a sustainable high level of network and information security;
- Transforming data into information and knowledge; and
- Achieving a high level of trust on the part of citizens and businesses.

## Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-Based Digital Government

In December 2020, the Bulgarian government signed the Berlin Declaration on Digital Society and Value-Based Digital Government, thus re-affirming its commitment – together with other EU Member States – to foster digital transformation in order to allow citizens and businesses to harness the benefits and opportunities offered by modern digital technologies. The Declaration aims to contribute to a value-based digital transformation by addressing and strengthening digital participation and digital inclusion in European societies.

## Programme for Scientific Research, Innovation and Digitalisation for the Economic Transformation 2021–2027

The Programme for Scientific Research, Innovation and Digitalisation for the Economic Transformation 2021–2027 (PNIIDIT) responds to the strategic needs and priorities of the country, proving for the implementation of a general policy for the development of scientific research and innovation to foster economic development. It also contributes to accelerating the digitalisation of the public sector, while building a favourable digital environment that ensures high-quality and secure exchange of information between different spheres of life and strengthens their interaction.

## National Recovery and Resilience Plan

Bulgaria's National Recovery and Resilience Plan devotes 26% of its total allocation to measures that support the digital transition. This includes investments in digital connectivity, digital skills, the digitalisation of public administration and businesses, as well as the digitalisation of the transport and energy sectors. Support for the deployment of broadband infrastructure throughout the country will help bridge the digital divide and enable improved access to online services.

## Digitalisation of Internal Processes

### eGovernment Act

The eGovernance Act, amended in June 2016, established a new State eGovernment Agency (SEGA) by merging the Electronic Governance Directorate of the Ministry of Transport, Information Technologies and Communications with the Executive Agency for Electronic Communication Networks and Information Systems. The eGovernment Act was amended in 2019 to strengthen the control functions of the State eGovernment Agency and to transpose Directive (EU) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of the Council (of 26 October 2016) on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies.

The amendments to the eGovernment Act expanded the authority of the State Agency for eGovernment's Chairman to establish and manage a portal for developers, a national repository,





and a mechanism for overseeing the versions of software source code and technical documentation for administrative authorities' information systems.

Another important addition is the regulation regarding electronic identification solutions (eID) and the process for their recognition, along with the creation and maintenance of an electronic authentication information system. This is to ensure the authenticity of the electronic documents and statements being exchanged.

In February 2022, amendments to the law transferred all the responsibilities previously held by the Chairman of the State eGovernment Agency in the areas of eGovernment, information technologies, and the information society to the Minister of eGovernment.

In September 2023, additional significant changes were implemented. The amended eGovernment Act provides detailed regulations on the role and responsibilities of the Central Data Administrator. A clear definition of a register has been given and the obligation for administrative authorities to keep the registers and databases entrusted to them by law in electronic form has been introduced. The most significant of this group of amendments is the one introducing new general rules for electronic registers maintenance. It also regulates the Information System for Centralised Establishment and Maintenance of Registers, which will be set up and managed by the Minister of e-Government. Administrative authorities will have free access to this system to create and maintain electronic registers that comply with the law. Another important set of amendments includes the requirement to provide electronic services online at a lower cost and the addition of an intermediary role for online administrative service requests.



### Portal for Developers

The portal provides and manages access to resources for the development of eGovernment software systems, information and communication technologies and the implementation of electronic services, which enable the reuse of already existing software codes and components and/or the accumulated knowledge in new eGovernment software systems development. The **portal** is intended for administrations and software systems developers.

## Digitalisation Supporting the EU Green Deal

No particular initiatives in this field have been reported to date.



## 3. Interoperability and Data

### Interoperability Framework

#### Bulgarian National Interoperability Framework

In 2022, the **Bulgarian National Interoperability Framework (BNIF)** was updated to align with the European Interoperability Framework. The aim of the Bulgarian Interoperability Framework is to make public sector operations easier and to enhance its efficiency by improving the quality of services provided to Bulgarian and EU citizens. The framework's specific objectives are as follows:

- Contribute to the development of a service-centred community;
- Contribute to greater transparency of information related to political decisions on public information systems;
- Support the joint delivery of services in the public sector;
- Create the conditions for free competition in the development of ICT in the administration;
- Reduce and optimise public sector IT expenses;
- Promote and support the delivery of public services in Bulgaria by fostering cross-border, cross-sector and cross-organisation interoperability; and
- Guide Bulgarian public administrations in their work to provide public services to businesses and citizens.

#### Reference Architecture for Interoperability

In 2022, the Ministry of eGovernance launched a project titled '**Development and Implementation of Reference Architecture for Interoperability**' (BRAI) under the 'Good Governance' programme.

The implementation of the project helps achieve the European Commission's objectives for the Single Digital Market. Moreover, the government launched a **federal portal** to publish information related on interoperability. This initiative aims to encourage various stakeholders, including the ICT industry, to adopt and implement the reference architecture.

The reusability of IT solutions, software components and is a key principle in the National Interoperability Framework. The framework aims to identify and develop building blocks in the eGovernment field that can be reused in multiple projects. This will prevent the need to continuously develop and invest in multiple ad-hoc solutions for different administrations.

Interoperability will be achieved through the project's outputs:

- The Reference Architecture for Interoperability;
- The Bulgarian National Interoperability Framework;
- The standard for the description of information objects metadata;
- Proposals for regulatory amendments; and
- Service Level Agreement (SLA) templates.

The BRAI implementation plan outlines the rules and responsibilities administrative bodies have to follow to maintain and implement the Bulgarian Reference Architecture for Interoperability at both central and local levels. The required implementation measures and activities have been identified and prioritized for both individual administrations and shared IT resources.

#### eGovernment Act

The **eGovernment Act** and its existing regulatory framework set the requirements for the provision of internal electronic administrative services and the exchange of electronic documents among administrative authorities under the conditions of interoperability, as well as the requirements for uniform standards and rules and semantic interoperability. These requirements for the provision of internal electronic administrative services also apply to public service providers and to public service organisations, unless otherwise provided by law.

According to the provisions of the latest amendment to the Electronic Governance Act, these functions are taken over by the Minister of eGovernment.

## Data Access, Management and Reuse



### Access to Public Information Act

The Access to Public Information Act, in force since 2000, regulates public relations concerning the right of access to public information, as well as the reuse of public sector information.

The law was amended in 2007 with the transposition of Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information, in 2016 with the transposition of Directive 2013/37/EC, amending Directive 2003/98/EC on the re-use of public sector information and in 2023 with the transposition of Directive (EU) 2019/1024, amending Directive 2013/37/EC.

The law sets standard terms and restrictions on the provision of information from the public sector for reuse, along with administrative penalties.

The law grants all citizens and legal entities the right to access information held by government institutions, regardless of how it is stored. Access is provided through the Public Information Access Platform. The law governs transparency in the administration's operations, mandates the provision of information for reuse, and requires a proactive and scheduled annual publication in open format of all the information, data and resources available in the freely accessible Open Data Portal.

The latest amendment to the Access to Public Information Act in September 2023 transposes into Bulgarian law the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on open data and the re-use of public sector information adopted and updated in 2019. The amendments also introduced a provision for 'openness by design and by default' as a new guiding principle for the provision of public sector information for reuse; FAIR principles; a number of new concepts, and additional obligations of public sector organizations, among other things..

The aim of the amendments in the draft legislation is to enhance the transparency of public institutions and facilitate analysis, predictions, and use. It is expected that all requests for public information will be shared on the public information platform in order to guarantee centralised access to information.

To promote accountability and monitor progress in the field of open data, public sector bodies must provide the Ministry of eGovernance with the essential information in electronic format every year.



### Personal Data Protection Act

The Bulgarian Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) was amended on 21 February 2019. The amended PDPA entered into force on 1 March 2019.

The main purpose of the **amendments** to the PDPA is to ensure the effective implementation of the European Union's new legal framework on data protection, namely [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data](#), also known as the GDPR.

A major change was the introduction of the accountability principle and the enhancement of the requirements for businesses, public authorities, and any person processing personal data. Data controllers are required to actively ensure compliance with personal data processing principles and rules at all stages of their operations, and provide evidence of this compliance to the supervisory authority.

The scope of the term personal data is broadening. It now includes a person's digital identity (such as social networking, email, and location) and activities (like GPS coordinates and IP address), which are recognised as personal data.

Special focus is given to specific categories of sensitive personal data, such as health and mental status, genetic information, beliefs, ideas, racial and ethnic background, and more. Under certain conditions, the appointment of a Data Protection Officer (DPO) is required.

The rights of data subjects have been expanded, including the right to be forgotten or withdraw consent once the primary purpose for which data were collected has been accomplished. In addition, it's important to consider that data processing must be transparent and there is an obligation to provide clear and concise information to the data subjects whose data are being processed.



## Open Data



### Open Data Portal

Since the beginning of 2019, administrations have been publishing their datasets on the [Open Data Portal](#). The portal is a single, central, public web-based information system that provides for the publication and management of reusable information, along with the relevant metadata, in an open, machine-readable format. Publication of public sector information in an open machine-readable format is an obligation for public sector organisations. The portal publishes data from national, regional and municipal levels. Citizens too have the opportunity to publish information.

The Open Data Portal has been developed on a PHP platform with the goal of improving processes related to the provision, access and reuse of public sector information financed by the Good Governance Operational Programme.



### Regulation on the Standard Terms for the Reuse of Public Sector Information and for its Publication in Open Format

Regulation No. 147 of 20 June 2016, amended by law No. 60 of 7 July 2020 and law No. 47 of 24 June 2022 laid down the requirements for the creation and maintenance of public sector information in an open format as well as the standard conditions for the reuse of public sector information.

Public sector organisations shall publish on the Open Data Portal the datasets and resources they develop and maintain, together with associated metadata. The law mandates that the public sector bodies shall make this information available for reuse either unconditionally or in line with the standard terms and conditions laid down in the regulation.

## Base Registries

The following table lists the Bulgarian base registries:

National	
Business and Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Commercial Register</b> and Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities register is a single electronic database that stores information and acts disclosed by law for companies, foreign companies branches, non-profit organisations and foreign non-profit organisations branches.</li> <li>The <b>Registration Agency</b> was established on 31 July 2004, following the adoption of the law amending and supplementing the Cadastre and Property Register Law. It is responsible for maintaining the Commercial registry, overseeing the Property Registry, the Register of spousal property relation, the BULSTAT Register, and the Central Register for special pledges.</li> </ul>
Transportation / vehicles	The <b>Register of Motor Vehicles</b> is maintained by the <b>Ministry of the Interior</b> and contains information about vehicles registered in Bulgaria, their owners, and more. Additional information about this register can be found in the <a href="#">Ministry of the Interior webpage</a> .
Land	The Land Register comprises parcels of real estate that enable the establishment, transfer, modification or termination of any real rights on the property. According to the <a href="#">Cadastre and Land Registry Law</a> , the <b>Agency for Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre</b> is responsible for creating and maintaining the cadastral map and cadastral registers for the entire country's territory.
Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The most important basic data entered in the <b>Civil Register</b> refer to the name, date and place of birth, gender, and citizenship of Bulgarians and residents, along with the unified citizen number provided to them.</li> <li>The Civil Register Act regulates and defines the purposes of civil registration. It contains reference data indicating the entries' subject, as</li> </ul>





	well as the events that led to the entry in the civil registration. The main events in this case are birth, marriage, and death. The Population Register - National Database 'Population' contains information on all Bulgarian citizens in the Republic of Bulgaria and is maintained by the Main Directorate 'Civil Registration and Administrative Services', which is a structure of the the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works. Additional information about this register can be found on the MRRB website.
Personal documents	Cadastre is the set of basic data on the location, boundaries and dimensions of real estate in Bulgaria.  The Directorate 'Bulgarian Identity Documents', a part of the Ministry of the Interior, maintains the register of Bulgarian identity documents. This register issues Bulgarian identity documents following the conditions and procedures set by law.
Sub-national	
Base Registries	

### Concept for Registry Reform

By Decision No. 546 of the Council of Ministers of 18 September 2019, the government adopted a **Concept for Registry Reform**. The concept document aims to optimise the organisation of the registries in the State administration and to reduce their maintenance costs. The final objective is to ensure official exchange of information and data for the provision of quality services, based on registries from other administrative bodies. While covering all registries at central and local level, the document did not include in its scope those that contain classified information.

The principles underpinning the registry reform are:

- One subject area - one registry;
- Application of the 'Once-Only principle';
- Digitalisation;
- Functional division;
- Unification of the structure, data format and technological processes;
- Control over own data;
- Open data; and
- Technology neutrality, open source and backup of data.

With Decision No. 298 of the Council of Ministers of 2 April 2021, the **updated Concept** for Registry Reform was adopted. It has been supplemented with new measures aimed at the digitalisation of paper datasets and the optimisation of key registries.

### Central Component

In Bulgaria, all primary registers are created and maintained on grounds stipulated by law. Pursuant to the **Ordinance on the General Requirements for Information Systems, Registers and Electronic Administrative Services**, adopted in 2017, registers can be accessed directly, or through a central component that ensures compliance with the interoperability and data exchange requirements, and that meets the requirements. The central component is managed by the Ministry of eGovernance.

### Commercial Register and Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities Act

The **Commercial Register and Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities Act** regulates the registration, keeping, storage and access to the Commercial Register and Register of Non-Profit Legal Entities, as well as the status of entries, deletions and announcements therein. The act also identifies the data owner as well as the ways to ensure security, interoperability and free access to data.

### Cadastre and Property Register Act

The **Cadastre and Property Register Act** provides a definition of how cadastre and property are understood in the Bulgarian context, and regulates the organisation, financing, development,



maintenance and use of the registers. Additionally, the act recognises and defines the difference between the Cadastre and the Land Register.



### Register BULSTAT

BULSTAT is the Unified Register for Identification of Economic and Other Subjects. The Law on the BULSTAT Register of 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 were aimed to unify the registration of businesses with the Register Agency under the Ministry of Justice. This was done to transform business registration from a court procedure into a purely administrative one, introducing a single BULSTAT number for tax and social security purposes.



### Public Procurement Register

Contracting authorities in Bulgaria are required to publish their tender notices in the State Gazette, as well as on the Public Procurement Register (PPR) kept by the PPA. Mandatory national eProcurement is provided by the PPR and the portal developed by the PPA. The PPR is an extensive electronic database which contains information about all procedures and allows for the collection, analysis and synthesis of information.



### Electronic Information System for Civil Registration and Administration

The Electronic Information System for Civil Registration and Administration (CRAS) is a system operated by the Directorate General for Citizens' Registration of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works that offers services related to citizens' personal IDs, data submission to statistical offices and generalised data related to the number of citizens residing in a given region, city or municipality.

The CRAS stores personal data on all Bulgarian citizens, which can be accessed by authorised government employees. Free public services include web access to electoral rolls for citizens who wish to check their electoral record or find their polling place, and generalised population data provided by agencies and national organisations.



### Registry Information Exchange System (RegiX)

Following Decision No. 338 of 23 June 2017, the Council of Ministers took measures to reduce the administrative burden on citizens and businesses by removing the requirement to submit certain official documentary evidence in paper form. In order to issue certificates, administrations make queries from registers, and the data is electronically retrieved by the administrations. The provision of these services is achieved via the Registry Information Exchange System (RegiX).

RegiX is an infrastructure that allows for the automated interconnection between numerous Bulgarian registers (currently 76) and information systems using machine-to-machine services. RegiX is a component of the central eGovernment system. The environment for automated interconnections between registers represents a way to facilitate the interaction between administrations, with the goal of providing integrated administrative services. Therefore, administrative authorities that offer public services are encouraged not to ask citizens or organisations to submit data more than once, if the administration already possess those data. Instead, they must collect them officially from the main data administrator. Notifications and data requests are electronically and automatically processed through RegiX, an internal electronic administrative service.

## Data Platforms and Portals

The following table lists the Bulgarian data platforms and portals infrastructures:

<p>Public Consultations Portal</p>	<p>The Council of Ministers launched an internet portal for national, regional and local public consultations. It aims to inform citizens on government activities, while encouraging them to take part in the shaping of such policies. In addition, it provides Bulgarians with the opportunity to publish their comments on government strategies or laws.</p>
<p>Public Information Access Platform</p>	<p>In 2019, the new online platform for accessing publicly available information was launched, enabling citizens and legal entities to easily</p>





	<p>obtain the public information they require. It is a unified, centralised, public web-based information system that provides the entire process of filing and reviewing applications for accessing information online. It refers to the relevant jurisdiction and, when needed, issues a decision and publishes relevant information from individuals as required under the Access to Public Information Act, while safeguarding applicants' personal data under the Personal Data Protection Act.</p>
<p>National Health Information System</p>	<p>The <a href="#">National Health Information System</a> is managed and maintained by the Ministry of Health. The system collects, processes and stores information on the health status of the population by creating and maintaining an electronic health record for each citizen. The national health information system includes the electronic health records of citizens and the registries, information databases and systems as defined by law.</p>
<p>Project Source Code Repository</p>	<p>Under the <a href="#">Electronic Governance Act</a>, administrative authorities use a public repository for the development, upgrading or deployment of information systems or electronic services, as well as a control system for the source code and technical documentation versions. The storage of projects – or parts thereof – designed for custom-made administration is hosted on <a href="#">GitHub</a>. Access to the GitHub repository is granted once the administrative authority receives an electronically signed application form. Since 2020 a new <a href="#">GitHub repository</a> is available. The old repository stores a mirror copy of the contents of the new one.</p>
<p>VAT Public Bulletin</p>	<p>The VAT <a href="#">Public Bulletin</a> provides information on VAT-registered companies in Bulgaria. It is updated once a month with data available in the archives of the tax divisions throughout the country.</p>
<p>GDPR in Your Pocket</p>	<p>The <a href="#">mobile application</a> 'GDPR in your pocket' has been developed under the SMEDATA project. The purpose of this mobile application is to present the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to citizens and SMEs in an easy-to-use and understandable way. In addition, it gives them practical information and advice on their rights and obligations in the field of personal data protection, in accordance with the GDPR. The user interface, as well as significant portions of the content, are available in English, Italian and Bulgarian. The SMEDATA mobile app 'GDPR in your pocket' can be downloaded free of charge from the Google app store (for Android devices) and the Apple store (for iOS devices).</p>
<p>Single portal for eJustice</p>	<p>The unified <a href="#">eJustice portal</a> is an electronic database of court cases heard by all regional, district, administrative, military, appellate, and supreme courts in the Republic of Bulgaria. In the optimized Single Portal for eJustice, it is possible to review basic information about all court cases with free public access.</p> <p>The eJustice portal allows registered access to an individual's entire electronic court cases folder, which includes all the documents in the court file. The Court grants access to an individual's electronic file once the subject or their legal representative submit an application.</p> <p>Access to a specific electronic case in the system can only be obtained by the parties and their representatives (determined by law or by authorization), and only after their express declaration of will.</p> <p>Access is granted via a user profile. Once created, this profile is used for all the individual's current and future cases, regardless of which court has jurisdiction to hear them. In order to create a profile to access the system, it is required to register on the portal first.</p>





<p>NATIONAL REVENUE AGENCY Electronic services portal</p>	<p>The electronic services platform of the NRA is integrated with over 80 information systems and offers access to over 150 electronic services for legal entities and 120 for individuals. It is based on Service Oriented Architecture (SOA). At portal.nra.bg, electronic services are organized into categories that can be viewed prior to logging in. The services can be accessed through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified electronic signature (QES);</li> <li>• PIK of the NRA;</li> <li>• E-Authentication; and</li> <li>• Free access.</li> </ul> <p>Access to these services for personal use by NRA customers no longer requires an application submission. Access to the NRA services is associated to individuals, not their Qualified Electronic Signature (Квалифициран Електронен Подпис or KEP), meaning that changing the KEP won't result in the need to submit additional documents to the NRA in order to access its services again.</p>
---------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

### Cross-border Infrastructures

The following table lists the European cross-border infrastructures of which Bulgaria is part of:

<p>European Business Registry</p>	<p>Bulgaria is a member of the <a href="#">European Business Registry Association (EBRA)</a>, formed in January 2019, through the coalition of the European Business Register (EBR) and the European Commerce Registers' Forum (ECRF).</p>
<p>EUCARIS</p>	<p>Bulgaria is a member of <a href="#">EUCARIS</a> and uses the EUCARIS technology for information exchange according to the Road Safety Directive (2015/413/EU). Currently Bulgaria is dealing with the implementation of the following EUCARIS elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the EU Prüm Council Decisions (2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA);</li> <li>▪ the 3rd Driving Licence Directive (2006/126/EU); and</li> <li>▪ the Salzburg agreement.</li> </ul>
<p>Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI)</p>	<p>The Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) is an IT system that helps social security institutions across the EU exchange information more quickly and securely, as required by EU rules on social security coordination. Since January 2020, the <a href="#">National Social Security Institute (NSSI)</a> has effectively joined the EESSI. The NSSI has started to exchange data electronically with other social security institutions in Europe on all matters falling within its competences.</p> <p>The National Revenue Agency (NRA) is connected to the TESTA network, through which it has access to the three CSN environments (Central Service Node) of the European Commission, thereby electronically exchanging social security information between Bulgaria and the EU within the EESSI.</p>
<p>TESTA</p>	<p>The <a href="#">Trans European Services for Telematics between Administrations (TESTA) network</a> is used for a number of cross-border use cases.</p> <p>For instance, if the NSSI wants to communicate pension data with Germany, they use a Secure Platform for the Electronic Exchange of Data (sPAD) offered by the Data Processing Centre of the DSRV</p>

	(German pension insurance bodies). This web application can be accessed via the European network TESTA. The NSSI has access to the Pension Payment List and the List of Death Certificates through sPAD.
Once-Only Technical System (OOTS)	The Once-Only Technical System (OOTS) allows public administrations in EU countries, including Bulgaria, to share information across borders. It implements the Once-Only principle, according to which citizens and businesses share their data with public authorities just once. Those authorities then communicate and share official data and documents upon the user's request.



### eIDAS Node

For the purposes of cross-border electronic identification, an eIDAS node has been developed and deployed in a production environment in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) 910/2014.

The technical specifications provided by the European Commission have been fully reused for its development (eIDAS-Node integration package version 2.6). At national level, the eIDAS node is completely integrated with the eAuthentication system.





## 4. Digital Transformation of Public Services

### Digital Public Services for Citizens



#### Digitalisation of the Employment Book

In Bulgaria, new procedures and compliance obligations for employers have been implemented, including the introduction of an electronic employment record and an employment register. The National Assembly adopted a Law on amendments and supplements to the Labour Code (the 'Labour Code Amendment Law') which was published in the State Gazette, Issue No. 85 dated 10 October 2023. The amendments will enter into force as from 1 June 2025, except for certain provisions.

The changes introduce digitalisation of the employment book, which should reduce the administrative burden for both employers and employees, while still using paper employment books (for the time being). They also ensure permanent access to electronic employment records for both employees and employers, improving user-friendliness and transparency.

Employers will no longer be required to submit notifications regarding the conclusion, amendment, or termination of employment contracts, but they shall enter relevant data in the employment register established and maintained by the NRA. The data to be submitted by employers to the employment register is described in Art. 349, Para. 1 of the Labour Code. By 1 June 2025, the NRA should establish the employment register which will contain the unified electronic employment records of employees.

As from 1 June 2025, the electronic document replacing the paper employment book, or service book for civil servants, will be called 'unified electronic employment record'.



#### Single Electronic Communications Network

The government has established and maintains a Single Electronic Communications Network since 2011, which allows for effective reduction of the cost of telecommunications services and operational costs for the central and local executive authorities. This leads to economy of scale for infrastructure development, maintenance and operation.

The single communication and information infrastructure enables the country to: (i) introduce eGovernment; (ii) apply video surveillance to public places, intersections, important buildings and schools; and (iii) provide eLearning, eAgriculture, eCommerce, eHealth, eTourism and eInclusion to disadvantaged people.

At present, the network covers all 28 district centres and more than 200 communities, encompassing over 1 000 access points. It is the main communications infrastructure for the needs of the State Hybrid Private Cloud and for the intranet networks for the State administration.



#### eGovernance Portal

The eGovernance portal is a crucial component of the eGovernment model. It aims to offer eGovernment services users a secure and user-friendly platform for accessing eGovernment services. Its goal is also to create a single entry point for delivering services in a user-friendly way.

The eGovernance portal offers a centralised and standardised application process. It is also possible to make payments and have access to electronic administrative services. Through the integrated use of e-government resources, the interaction between citizens and businesses with the state administration has been facilitated.

### eInvoicing



#### eInvoicing Legislation

Amendments to the [Public Procurement Act](#) also concern electronic invoices. In the case of payments under public procurement contracts, contracting authorities are obliged to accept and process electronic invoices, provided their content meets the requirements of the Value Added Tax Act. Invoices must comply with the European electronic invoicing standard approved by the



Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/1870 of 16 October 2017 on the publication of the reference of the European standard on electronic invoicing and the list of its syntaxes pursuant to Directive 2014/55/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council or an equivalent standard with which it is implemented.

### eInvoicing Platform

In Bulgaria, there is no common eInvoicing platform available for B2G eInvoicing in public procurement. Some solution providers from the private sector offer platforms for the exchange of eInvoices, such as [eFaktura.bg](#) and [inv.bg](#). The former is offered by the largest eInvoicing provider [BORICA–Bankservice AD](#). It is a joint-stock company owned by the Bulgarian National Bank and national commercial banks. It develops and maintains the basic IT infrastructure of the payment industry in Bulgaria.

## eHealth and Social Security

### eHealth

In December 2020, the government took action to draft the [National Health Strategy 2021–2030](#). eHealth represents one of the pillars for the implementation of the strategic goals and priorities of the National Health Strategy 2030. In September 2022, the government adopted an updated National Health Strategy 2030 which will have to be approved by the Parliament. The strategy considers innovative solutions in the field of eHealth as a key tool both to prevent diseases and to promote a healthy lifestyle, leading to improvements in the quality of life of citizens while enabling more effective ways of organising and delivering health services and care.

### eInsurance

In 2019, the government approved the strategy [eInsurance 2018–2023](#) and a roadmap for its implementation. The strategy, which extends and further expands the Strategy for the Development of the National Social Security Institute 2018–2021, outlines technological priorities and determines the approach and principles for their implementation. A detailed roadmap at project level has been developed for the same period to achieve the objectives of the eInsurance Sectoral Strategy.

## Other Key Initiatives

### eCustoms

The [eCustoms Sectoral Strategy](#) for the period 2016–2025 outlines the technological priorities for the [National Customs Agency](#) to create eCustoms by 2025 and determines the approach and principles for their implementation. A roadmap 2016–2025 was developed to achieve the objectives of the strategy.

In November 2022, the Council of Ministers adopted a Sectorial Strategy for the Development of Electronic Management in the Customs Agency ("[e-Customs](#)") for the period 2021–2027, as well as the roadmap for its implementation. The strategy further develops and upgrades the digitisation projects foreseen in the previous strategy for the period 2016–2025. The strategy reflects the vision for digital transformation of the Bulgarian Customs administration and is in line with the measures adopted in the Customs Union, fulfilling the requirement that a State shall build secure, integrated, interoperable and accessible electronic customs systems for the exchange of data contained in customs documents.

### Strategy for the Digital Transformation of the Construction Sector 2030

The [National Strategy for the Digital Transformation of the Construction Sector](#) introduces construction information modelling in the design, building and maintenance of constructions. The strategy was developed as a joint collaboration between the Bulgarian government and the European Commission, and it builds on Bulgaria's main strategic documents: (i) the Digital Transformation of Bulgaria for the period 2020–2030; (ii) the integrated plan in the field of energy and climate of the Republic of Bulgaria for the period 2021–2030; (iii) the National Development Programme Bulgaria 2030; and (iv) the National Plan for Recovery and Sustainability 2022–2026. The implementation of the digital reform of the construction sector will lead to an increase in the quality and efficiency of the processes of design, approval and execution of constructions, as well as to the creation of opportunities for their better maintenance, durability and improved



management of energy resources. The administration will provide complex and synchronized electronic services by ensuring interoperability and the automated exchange of data and electronic documents.

The strategy foresees:

- The setup of IT infrastructure for the digital transformation of the construction sector;
- The electronic management of the procedures for referral, official forwarding for intra-departmental and inter-departmental coordination, approval and delivery of the final administrative act related to development plans and investment projects;
- The development of databases for the structural planning of the territory, investment design and construction authorisation, cadastre and landslide, abrasion and erosion processes as well as their publication or their electronic provision to third parties;
- The creation of opportunities to increase the qualifications of the public and private sector for working with Construction Simulator (SIM) level 2;
- The transition to SIM level 2 digital work mode for public and private employees working in construction processes;
- The provision of quality education to implement SIM in vocational training for secondary technical education and higher schools in the field of construction; and
- The creation of conditions for the development of innovations in the construction sector.



### Programme 'Development of the Regions' 2021-2027

The objectives of the Programme 'Development of the Regions' 2021-2027 are:

- Achieving balanced territorial development;
- Addressing the problems related to demographic imbalances in the country;
- Economic growth;
- The creation of an attractive living environment; and
- Access to quality health, educational and social services, culture, entertainment, sports, work and leisure.

The objectives of the 'Development of the Regions' 2021-2027 Programme will be achieved thanks to the implementation of tools aimed to improve the integration of territorial development. The goal is to achieve better investment focus, enhance interventions efficiency, promote intersectoral dialogue and establish successful partnerships with various local stakeholders through said integrated territorial development tools.

The Directorate General 'Strategic Planning and Programmes for Regional Development' (DG SPPRD) acts as Managing Authority for the 'Regions in Growth' Operational Programme 2014-2020 (OPRR 2014-2020) and for the 'Regional Development' Operational Programme 2007-2013 (OPRR 2007-2013). With Law 712 of 6 October 2020, its designation as Managing Authority for the Regional Development OPRR has been extended to include the new programming period 2021-2027. The DG SPPRD also acts as competent national body responsible for the management and control of the activities financed with funds from the Solidarity Fund of the European Union. It also carries out activities on the formation and implementation of policies in the field of regional development and it coordinates and controls activities on maritime spatial planning and the development of the Maritime Spatial Plan of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The DG SPPRD is part of the specialised administration of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works.



### eCommerce Act

The eCommerce Act was enacted in Parliament in December 2006 to implement [Directive 2000/31/EC on electronic commerce](#). It regulated the obligations of service providers regarding contracts by means of eDevices and stipulated the rules limiting the service providers' responsibilities as to the provision of access and transfer of information services. It introduced a definition of spam mail, as well as the development of a specialised register of email addresses of legal entities who do not wish to receive such messages.

In February 2019, the Bulgarian government amended the act allowing the user of the information society service to receive clear and detailed information in accordance with Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation).



In November 2020, additional amendments expanded the range of information society services included in the act. Information society services are also intermediary online services within the meaning of Regulation (EU) 2019/1150 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on promoting fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services (OJ L 186/57 of 11 July 2019), hereinafter Regulation (EU) 2019/1150.

### eDelivery

The **eDelivery System** allows to send, receive and store electronic documents for/from public authorities, citizens and legal entities. eDelivery is an electronic equivalent to registered mail with a return receipt and is provided in accordance with Article 43 of Regulation (EC) 910/2014 and Article 26(2) and 26(4) of the EGA.

All administrative authorities can integrate the eDelivery module into their information systems or use it via a user interface.

With Decision No. 357 of 29 June 2017, the Council of Ministers obliged administrative authorities to bring their electronic document exchange systems in line with a uniform technical protocol approved by the Chair of the State eGovernment Agency. Since 1 November 2018, all administrations are obliged to exchange documents only by electronic means. The technical protocol for exchange of messages in the State administration (SEOS), now supported by the Ministry of eGovernance has also been upgraded.

The new version is based on AS4 protocol, which ensures interoperable and secure data exchange and is used by the European Commission in CEF eDelivery.

### Electronic Payment Gateway

Since 2018, an electronic payment environment has been in place for electronic administrative service providers. It is accessible via the **Electronic Payment Gateway**.

The electronic payment environment records electronic payments related to the provision of electronic administrative services, creates electronic payment documents and provides for the possibility of paying them in the mode chosen by consumers.

In 2021, the State eGovernment Agency expanded the functional capabilities of the Single Point of Entry to include electronic payments in the State and local administration. The integration was made possible with a centralised virtual POS terminal. These services can be used by all administrative structures, including municipalities. The centralised VPOS terminal allows for online payments, without applying any transaction fees or commissions.

## Digital Public Services for Businesses

### eSender Service

Tendering procedures above a certain threshold are published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJ). The **PPA** provides contracting authorities with the **eSender service** free of charge, which enables the automatic forwarding of relevant tenders to the OJ. It offers a centralised electronic service through which tenders may be submitted on all publication platforms, thus eliminating the need to submit the same notice several times.

## Public Procurement

### Electronic Public Procurement Awarding

Electronic awarding became compulsory from 1 January 2021. Electronic awarding is the awarding of public procurements, carried out by electronic means, using the generally accessible, centralized and electronic public procurement platform. The European directives concerning public procurement (Directive 2014/24/EU and Directive 2014/25/EU) require the mandatory incorporation in the national legislation of the option for electronic submission of offers (bids), the introduction of fully electronic communication in the award process and the use of online tools for awarding the public procurement. The Public Procurement Act (Article 39a) regulates the possibility for public procurement award, including through dynamic purchasing systems, framework agreements and qualification systems, as well as for holding competitions for a project through the centralized electronic platform.





## Public Procurement Act

In April 2016, a new **Public Procurement Act** entered into force in Bulgaria. The law contained regulations covering the different sub-phases of eProcurement, such as: eNotification, eTendering, eAuctions and the Dynamic Purchasing System.

It fully complies with Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and the Council on public procurement.

From 1 November 2019, the provisions foresee the mandatory use of the National Electronic Platform (CAIS EOP) from the opening of the procedures to the receipt and opening of the electronic applications for participation and tenders, as well as for the electronic communication in the course of the procurement procedure. Before that date, trainings, testing and registration of users in the platform were carried out in order to smoothly switch over to eProcurement.

The latest **amendments** to the Public Procurement Act entered into force in 2020 and were published in the State Gazette No. 107 of 18 December 2020.

The implementation of the platform took place in two stages. After being completed with all functionalities in 2020, relevant stakeholders were mandated to use the National Electronic Platform since 1 January 2021.



## Public Procurement Portal

The **Public Procurement Portal (PPP)** provides access to information on different aspects of public procurement. The information is structured in specific thematic areas and geared to the specific interests of major user groups. The information is updated daily.

The PPP presents the organisation and activities of the Public Procurement Agency (PPA), the legal framework and the practice in the field, as well as useful references to other internet resources. The aim is to achieve greater awareness, publicity and transparency on public procurement issues, as well as appropriate methodological assistance to those involved in the process. The portal is public, and the access is free of charge. Both the Bulgarian and the English versions of the portal are supported.

## Digital Inclusion and Digital Skills



### Digital Skills Trainings 2020-2026

Between 2020 and 2026, around EUR 165 million from the Recovery and Resilience Facility will be used to fund **digital skills trainings and the establishment of a platform for adult learning**. Its goal is to improve the up- and re-skilling of the workforce, with a focus on digital skills. This will be accomplished thanks to the creation of a completely functional digital platform which will provide access to online courses and learning resources aimed at increasing adult participation in distance learning. Additionally, a network of 760 digital communities will be established across the nation to provide free access to the training platform. Approximately 500 000 employed and unemployed individuals will receive basic and/or intermediate level digital skills training and 100 000 employed and unemployed individuals will validate their basic and/or intermediate level digital skills knowledge with the aid of this investment.

Unemployed, inactive or employed people from certain target groups will receive training vouchers by the Employment Agency. Vouchers' recipients will be able to select their own training category and provider. The value of the vouchers depends on the course's type and length. First-level professional qualifications will have a voucher of BGN 660 for a minimum of 300 study hours; second-level qualifications will have a voucher worth BGN 1 320 for a minimum of 660 study hours; and third-level qualifications will have a BGN 1 980 voucher for a minimum of 960 study hours.



### Human Resources Development Programme 2021-2027

The Human Resources Development Programme (2021-2027) supports the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights in the areas of 'Equal opportunities and access to the labour market', 'Fair working conditions' and 'Social protection and inclusion', as well as its corresponding Action Plan. The programme supports the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and complies with the principles recognized in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

The functions of the Managing Authority of the 'Human Resources Development' Programme are performed by the Main Directorate 'European Funds, International Programmes and Projects' at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies.

The programme implements measures in five priority areas:



- Priority 1 'Promoting employment and skills development';
- Priority 2 'Social inclusion and equal opportunities';
- Priority 3 'Promoting youth employment';
- Priority 4 'Social Innovation'; and
- Priority 5 'Technical assistance'.

The programme includes specific indicators to measure youth employment, entrepreneurship and social inclusion of vulnerable groups. It has two main areas of impact: support for the labour market and skills development, and social inclusion. Over BGN 2 365 billion will go to measures aimed to promote employment, of which over BGN 662 million are earmarked to update the lifelong learning system, to foster the acquisition of digital competences, to develop new skills (including "green" ones), to adapt to changes, and to improve working conditions and the work-life balance of workers. The measures are expected to reach 818 000 people. Opportunities for qualification, training, subsidised employment, skills validation, and more will be made available to 258 000 unemployed.

As of spring of 2023, the programmes and training methods are being developed, based on the results of the projects implemented by the social partners under the Development of Digital Skills operation. It is expected that over 700 000 Bulgarian citizens will undergo digital skills training in the next few years.





## 5. Trust and Cybersecurity

### eID and Trust Services



#### Introduction of the Cloud Electronic Signature

The Bulgarian National Electronic Identification Scheme is still temporarily suspended after an appeal from one of the applicants against the public procurement procedure. The Bulgarian Supreme Administrative Court has referred a question to the Court of Justice of the European Union.

In 2019, the Cloud Electronic Signature was introduced, as a new means of electronic identification in addition to the existing ones (QES, personal identification code of the National Revenue Agency and the National Social Security Institute, unique access code of the National Health Insurance Fund). With the cloud signature, citizens and businesses are able to request the services provided by the administration through a mobile smart device with internet access from anywhere in the world, 24/7, 365 days a year. With it, each user is able to access the [Unified Portal for Access to Electronic Administrative Services](#), which is maintained by the State eGovernment Agency.

In 2019, a project was prepared to build a two-factor authentication system. The project aims to provide an effective and easy way to yield additional security to user identity verification. This code can be sent to a mobile device and can be generated either by a specific application, a physical device (token) or by other technological means. When using the two-factor authentication system to gain access to the requested administrative service, users must confirm their identity in two steps and via two channels.

The use of a two-factor authentication is a widespread and reliable solution in terms of information security.



#### Decision No. 364 of August 2021

In August 2021, [Decision No. 634](#) of the Council of Ministers was adopted, designating the State eGovernment Agency (SEGA) as the competent authority to notify electronic identification schemes in accordance with Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 910/2014. The same Council of Ministers Decree also states that providers of electronic identification services, whose services are listed by the Communications Regulation Commission in the national trusted list as trust services, may request the Chairman of the SEGA to notify an electronic identification scheme, provided that it complies with the requirements of Articles 7-9 of Regulation (EU) 910/2014. The notification takes place after verification by the SEGA and recognition of the electronic identification scheme by decision of the Council of Ministers. The inspection is carried out in accordance with a procedure laid down in the Methodology approved by the Chairman of the SEGA.

In order to ensure eID through mobile devices, the new Ministry of eGovernance has started the development of a mobile app for eID and e-signing – BGID. BGID addresses the existing problem stemming from the lack of widely spread, accessible, secure, reliable, easy-to-use and free-of-charge means of electronic identification, conveniently available through a mobile device. The application will be available for both Android and IOS and is scheduled to be ready by the summer of 2023.



#### Electronic Document and Electronic Trust Services Act

This act regulated the electronic document and the electronic trust services. Bulgaria amended the [Law on Electronic Document and Electronic Signature](#) in 2017 to:

- Create the conditions for a comprehensive cross-border and inter-sector framework for secure, reliable, and easy to use electronic transactions in the internal market;
- Create the conditions to develop digital infrastructure to improve the quality of public services, which would facilitate cross-border access to businesses and citizens within the EU and from other leading countries in the field of eGovernment;
- Ensure a fruitful European collaboration promoting innovation and the exchange of best practices for the implementation of cross-border services, and synchronisation with European initiatives and programmes relating to eGovernment; and
- Build trust in the online environment, which is a key factor for economic and social development. A lack of confidence in the online environment discourages citizens and public authorities from carrying out electronic transactions and electronic service delivery.



The amendments to the Law on Electronic Document and Electronic Signature aimed to ensure that national legislation relating to the provision of electronic certification services complied with European legislation and in particular [Regulation \(EC\) 910/2014](#) of the European Parliament and the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC. In view of the direct applicability of the Regulation, it provided for the repeal of provisions relating to elements of the system that are specifically regulated by the act of the European Union.

With the entry into force of the new amendment, a qualified electronic signature has the legal effect of a handwritten signature, while simple and advanced electronic signatures may be recognised as handwritten signatures.



### Electronic Identification Act

A new [Electronic Identification Act](#) was adopted in May 2016 and came into force on 21 November 2016. In addition, amendments to the law on national identification documents were introduced. This was a key step for the accelerated introduction of eGovernment, as it defines a unified scheme for electronic identification of citizens and businesses.



### eSignature in the eGovernment Act

Article 31, Section II of the [eGovernment Act](#) regulates the use of the electronic signature for eGovernment application. The Electronic Document and Electronic Trust Services Act regulated the electronic document and the electronic trust services by defining an electronic signature in the meaning of Article 3(10) of Regulation (EC) 910/2014: an enhanced electronic signature is an electronic signature within the meaning of Article 3(11) of Regulation (EC) 910/2014; a qualified electronic signature is an electronic signature within the meaning of Article 3(12) of the same Regulation. In particular, the rules to obtain, use, renew and revoke electronic signature certificates within the administrations are settled in the Ordinance on Electronic Signature Certificates in Administrations.



### Biometric Passport

The first new generation of travel documents that contain biometric data began circulating in March 2010, enabling Bulgarian citizens to carry passports that meet all international requirements. This new-generation [passport](#) is a combined paper and electronic document which contains biometric information (e.g. facial recognition, fingerprint recognition, iris recognition) that can be used to authenticate a traveller's identity.



### eSignature

Accredited trust service providers on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria are listed in the [Register of Certified Service Providers Issuing Certificates for Qualified Electronic Signature](#). The electronic signature certificate enables several eServices, including: (i) online payment of duties and taxes; (ii) customs and tax declarations filing; (iii) access to commercial registers; (iv) eCommerce; (v) authorised access to confidential information; and (vi) electronic signing of documents/contracts. Furthermore, it reduces both costs and time for interacting with governmental bodies.

Most eGovernment services use the Uniform Citizen Number (UCN) for identifying their users. It is a unique ten-digit code for each Bulgarian citizen. eGovernment services typically extract the UCN from the user's certificate for electronic signature.

## Cybersecurity



### National Cybersecurity Strategy

On 18 July 2016, with Decision No. 583, the Council of Ministers adopted the National Cybersecurity Strategy '[Cyber-Sustainable Bulgaria 2020](#)'. The strategy outlined the stages of development and the basic security targets and cyber hygiene requirements that the Bulgarian information society has to achieve in order to withstand all kinds of hybrid threats.

Furthermore, the strategy defined the mechanisms for coordination at strategic, political, operational and technical levels, as well as an effective platform for information exchange and collective response. The objectives and measures, as along with the extensive use of various forms of public-private partnerships, were defined in nine main areas.

Building on the 2020 version, the government approved with Decision No. 301 of 2 April 2021 an updated cybersecurity strategy, called '[CyberSustainable Bulgaria 2023](#)'. . Its implementation



established a fully integrated national cybersecurity ecosystem capable of adjusting to global cyber threats and of responding to large-scale attacks against Bulgarian information assets. Being integrated into the cybersecurity framework of the European Union is a strategic goal defined in the National Development Programme 'Bulgaria 2030'. The updated cybersecurity strategy ensures that the Republic of Bulgaria becomes a reliable and enduring partner and participant in shared networks and security systems with its Euro-Atlantic allies. This is achieved through innovative technological advancements, while also prioritising economic and social development. Bulgaria is equipped to actively engage in preventing and addressing emerging cyber threats and crises.

The National Cyber Security Strategy is shown to be flexible in being updated to align with the new European regulations, new cybersecurity laws, as well as to meet the requirements of Directive (EU) 2022/2555.



### Cybersecurity Act

In line with the obligations of being a Member State of the European Union, Bulgaria enacted the [Cybersecurity Act](#) on 12 November 2018, as published in the Bulgarian State Gazette No. 94, which required the country to introduce specific provisions into its domestic legislation and establish a dedicated body by 9 May 2018 to enforce Directive (EU) 2016/1148 of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning measures for a high common level of security of network and information systems across the Union. In line with the adoption of Directive (EU) 2022/2555 of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures for a high common level of cybersecurity across the Union, amending Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 and Directive (EU) 2018/1972, and repealing Directive (EU) 2016/1148 (NIS 2 Directive), an interdepartmental working group was established. This group, under the guidance of the Minister of Electronic Governance, was tasked with incorporating the provisions of the directive into Bulgarian legislation. A broad public discussion is planned before the adoption of the new Cybersecurity Act by the Bulgarian parliament.



### Ordinance on Minimum Requirements for Network and Information Security

In 2019, a new [Ordinance on Minimum Requirements for Network and Information Security](#) entered into force. It repealed the existing Ordinance on General Requirements for Network and Information Security. Its adoption enhances the regulatory framework in the field of network and information security in accordance with the [Cybersecurity Act](#).

The ordinance defines the network and information security principles and goals. Requirements have been set for organisational measures for the protection of networks and information systems, as well as the related information covered by the Cybersecurity Act.

The Ordinance also recommends procedures, establishes rules for the performance of compliance checks, and defines the procedure for keeping, storing and accessing a Register of Essential Services. Standardised forms for incident notifications and a form for aggregated incident statistics pursuant to the Cybersecurity Act are introduced and the taxonomy and prioritisation in this area are harmonised.

Following the ordinance, three key cybersecurity projects were initiated in 2019:

- The project on Building Components of the National Cyber Security System involved setting up various key elements. These included a National Cybersecurity Coordination and Organizational Network, a National Cyber Situation Centre, a National Cybercrime Centre, a National Computer Security Incident Response Team, and enhancing the Centre for Monitoring and Responding to Incidents with Significant Impact on Communication and Information Systems of Strategic Objects and Activities Important for National Security at the [State Agency for National Security \(SANS\)](#);
- The project on Capacity Building and Services Enhancement of CERT Bulgaria (CBSEC-BG) included several tasks, such as setting up a Centre for National and International Cyber Exercises, creating a Malware Analysis Laboratory, and the establishing a Forensic Analysis Laboratory; and
- The FORESIGHT project aimed to develop a federated cyber-range solution to enhance the preparedness of cybersecurity professionals at all levels and advance their skills towards preventing, detecting, reacting and mitigating sophisticated cyberattacks. The ordinance will undergo amendments after the adoption of the new Cybersecurity Act to ensure compliance with its requirements.



### Law on the Protection of Personal Data

Adopted in January 2002 and last amended in May 2018 due to the GDPR, the [Law on the Protection of Personal Data](#) was modelled on [Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data](#). It applied to the protection of individuals in relation to the processing of their personal data, granting them the right to access and correct information about them held by public and private bodies. It defined lawful grounds for the collection, storage and processing of individual personal data. The implementation of the law is monitored by the [Commission for Personal Data Protection](#), an independent supervisory authority.





## 6. Innovative Technologies

### Artificial Intelligence (AI)

#### Concept for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Bulgaria by 2030

In October 2020, the government adopted a concept for the creation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Bulgaria by 2030. The concept is based on documents developed by a team of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) and external experts, namely: the Framework for National Strategy for the Development of Artificial Intelligence in Bulgaria (2019) and the National Strategy for Development of Artificial Intelligence in Bulgaria by 2030 (preliminary vision), published in 2020. The application of AI in sectors such as education, public services, agriculture, healthcare, and environment is the main priority of the document.

The document offers a comprehensive vision for AI development and use in Bulgaria. It is based on the strategic priorities set by the European Commission, which considers AI as one of the main drivers of digital transformation in Europe.

The main goal of the concept document is to guide efforts towards developing and implementing AI systems by building scientific, business and managerial capability at national level. Moreover, the concept document outlines the main steps ahead to provide modern communication and scientific infrastructure for the development of new generation digital technologies. The document also identifies the need to improve the lifelong education and training systems. In the future, AI will support the development of research and innovation activities in key sectors. Furthermore, the document outlines the introduction of an ethical and legal regulatory framework as key milestone to ensure broad public trust.

#### Artificial Intelligence in the Strategy for the Development of eGovernment in the Republic of Bulgaria 2019-2025

In the revised eGovernance Strategy for the period 2019–2025, an updated roadmap for its implementation was introduced. This roadmap includes measures to promote the adoption of innovative technologies like AI, blockchain, Internet of Things (IoT) and big data in the public sector. As highlighted in the Coordinated Action Plan, big data form the foundation for the development of effective AI technologies. Bulgaria has included specific measures to promote the widespread adoption of chatbots in eGovernment services and the implementation of machine learning to anticipate user behaviour and enhance the accessibility of online public services.

The Strategy covers the development of the following four main areas of communication and services:

- 'Administration - Citizens': it incorporate modern Internet and intranet WEB-based solutions, along with traditional methods, to enhance communication and service delivery for citizens. This integration brings about significant improvements in accessibility and quality of services;
- 'Administration - Business': it incorporates modern solutions that optimise processes and business relations between the administration and various economic entities;
- 'Administration - Administration': it incorporates the integration of information technologies at a national and intergovernmental level to facilitate efficient communication among different administrative bodies; and
- 'Internal departmental efficiency and effectiveness': it involves organising and optimising business processes, improving relations between administration and employees, and enhancing communication within specific administrative structures.

#### Strategy for the Digitisation of Agriculture and Rural Areas

Bulgaria adopted a Strategy for the Digitisation of Agriculture and Rural Areas that includes measures based on AI and blockchain.

The strategy envisages the use of AI to track production, protect against pests, create a continuous farm-to-table supply chain, and ease the administrative burden for farmers.

#### Industry 4.0

By Protocol Decision No. 37 of 30 August 2017, the Council of Ministers approved the 'Concept for the Digital Transformation of the Bulgarian Industry (Industry 4.0)' as a basis for the development of a strategy for Bulgaria's participation in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



The Ministry of the Economy is coordinating the preparation of the strategy for the participation of Bulgaria in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, along with a working group comprised of stakeholders which has been established to draft the strategy.

The concept takes into account Bulgaria's achievements and the new European initiatives in terms of industrial digitalisation. It aims to create the conditions for the modernisation, automation and competitive positioning of the Bulgarian economy in the medium to long term (2019–2027).

One of its priorities is promoting the use of AI technologies in the industry, particularly by SMEs. One of the proposed key measures focuses on improving modern communication and data infrastructure, promoting the development and use of AI, and enhancing the capacity of the ICT sector. This includes offering AI-based applications and solutions in the market, as well as for using AI to boost its own productivity and competitiveness.

### Action Plan for Artificial Intelligence in Education and Science

The Ministry of Education and Science is working to prepare an action plan to support the use of AI in the fields of education and science. The plan is intended to become part of the overall Bulgarian effort to actively support the development of specific digital skills and the use of innovative technologies.

A national scientific programme to support research in the field of AI, intelligent systems and large databases is also being prepared.

The Bulgarian Academy of Sciences developed a national strategic framework for the development of AI in Bulgaria by 2030. The framework considers the social aspects of the technology, stating that the emergence of a new wave of digital technologies (machine learning, robotics, big data, autonomous systems) have significant consequences for the economy and labour markets, with the potential to cause major socio-economic changes.

In Bulgaria, healthcare, public services, smart agriculture, animal husbandry and environmental protection are considered consumer sectors of AI and therefore AI implementation areas. The technological areas where the country has good potential for the development of AI-based products and services are, among others: (i) service robotics; (ii) development (and testing) of software; (iii) human-machine interfaces in natural language, with priority to the Bulgarian language; (iv) security systems; (v) AI systems for the management of industrial platforms; (vi) critical resources; and (vii) infrastructures.

## Distributed Ledger Technologies

### European Blockchain Services Infrastructure

In the updated [eGovernance Strategy](#) for the period 2019–2025, along with the [updated roadmap](#) for its implementation, measures were included for the development and use of innovative technologies in the public sector, including blockchain. Bulgaria is an active participant in the Policy Group of the European Blockchain Partnership. Bulgarian representatives from State institutions and businesses have been nominated for all EBP user groups, as well as for the technical group.

A project has been done under the Connecting Europe Facility Blockchain framework (European Blockchain Services Infrastructure CEF 2020-1 call). It runs until the first half of 2023. The goal was to set up, deploy, and maintain the first Bulgarian EBSI node, as well as develop three use cases - ESSI (European Self Sovereign Identity), Notarisation, and Diplomas. The consortium, which includes five companies, aimed to deliver to the citizens and the public administration a solid cross-border foundation for interoperable trans-European digital communication. The consortium had the support of the competent authorities and major public and science organisations such as the Bulgarian Research and Education Network (BREN) and the Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics of the Sofia University. They are both consumers of the proposed action's results and contributors in the overall process and future scale. The users, both single individuals and the public administration, have been encouraged to use the services by raising awareness, showcasing, and piloting the results, so as to illustrate their added value and user-friendliness.

## Big Data

### eGovernance Strategy

In the updated [eGovernance Strategy](#) for the period 2019–2025, along with the [updated roadmap](#) for its implementation, measures were included for the development and use of





innovative technologies in the public sector, with special emphasis on big data. Bulgaria has launched a process for policy development concerning data and data-driven governance and economy. The government plans to develop a dedicated National Data Strategy and regulatory framework for data policy implementation.

## Cloud & Edge Computing



### State Hybrid Private Cloud

Bulgaria is upgrading the State Hybrid Private Cloud and is gradually increasing its capacity. The State Hybrid Private Cloud aims to optimise the costs for implementing and maintaining the ICT resources of central and local government administrative structures, providing technologies that enable the optimal use of information and communication resources.

It also enables a rapid, secure, flexible and cost-effective way to provide resources in the form of cloud services for the needs of citizens and businesses, for in-house information and communication service processes, projects and systems and for maintaining and developing nationally-significant electronic information arrays and databases.

Since the end of June 2021, the [State Hybrid Private Cloud \(SHPC\)](#) has been officially operating, providing ICT services such as co-location, Infrastructure-as-a-Service, Platform-as-a-Service, along with various resources for over 50 centralised and administrative eGovernment systems. The upgrade of the SHPC aims to provide ICT services as Software-as-a Service (SaaS), as well as cloud services geared to public authorities. These will include advanced-technologies-based services, such as document data extraction, workflow tools, business intelligence & analysis, and Cloud Computing for public authorities.

## Internet-of-Things (IoT)



### Strategy for the Digital Transformation of the Construction Sector 2030

In March 2022, the government took action to prepare a [National Strategy for the Digital Transformation of the Construction Sector](#). The strategy introduced construction information modelling the design, erection and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure. The integration of digital technologies in the field of construction is seen as a key element to address the main challenges faced by the sector. Data collection technologies, namely sensors, IoT and 3D scanning, are the starting point for the digitisation of the construction sector, as they provide most of the data. Process automation includes the use of robots, 3D printing and drones to automate human activities in the construction sector. The digital transformation of enterprises is another important aspect to innovate this sector. Businesses are encouraged to introduce digital technologies and products with a smaller ecological footprint, as well as improve their energy and resource efficiency.

## Quantum Computing



### Discoverer Supercomputer

Bulgaria is a founding member of the [EuroHPC Joint Undertaking](#). Bulgaria has supported the establishment of a [petascale supercomputer](#) – the Discoverer Supercomputer, located in Sofia, at the Sofia Tech Park. It was funded by a joint investment by EuroHPC JU and the Bulgarian government and inaugurated in October 2021.



### National Competence Centres

The Ministry of Education and Science also supports the project '[National Competence Centres \(NCC\)](#)' under EuroHPC JU. The project is co-funded by the European Commission and the Ministry of Education and Science. The partners in the Bulgarian project consortium are the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (coordinator), the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and the University for National and World Economics.

## Gigabit and Wireless High-speed Networks



### National Broadband Infrastructure Plan

High-speed broad connectivity is at the heart of the updated National Broadband Infrastructure Plan for Next Generation Access 'Connected Bulgaria', adopted by the government in 2020.



## GovTech



### Digital Backpack

The Ministry of Education and Science has created the Digital Backpack, an electronic platform to help solve the challenges of remote, face-to-face or hybrid learning. It provides:

- A rich array of digital educational content;
- Quick and easy access to virtual classrooms;
- Homework, grades, attendance - all in one place; and
- Focus on the individual relationship between teachers and students.

The **Digital Backpack** includes:

1. Online lessons: rich learning material presented in the form of digital lessons for students from grades 1 to 12;
2. Assessment: the platform enables students and their parents to have access to their current grades;
3. Homemade: teachers can set independent work assignments for students to complete; and
4. Virtual classrooms: online lessons can be provided using virtual classrooms.



### Metaministry

In 2022, [Move.bg](#) developed a metaverse-based platform hosting the first virtual Ministry in Bulgaria, the Ministry of Climate Transition and Green Transformation. This "Metaministry" will create and implement circular economy policies, develop green innovations, and help make progress towards the green energy transition.

# 7. Digital Public Administration Governance



For more details on Bulgaria's responsible bodies for digital policy and interoperability, its main actors, as well as relevant digital initiatives, please visit the [NIFO collection](#) on Joinup.

## National

### Ministry of eGovernance

By a [Decision of the National Assembly of 13 December 2021](#), a new structure of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria was adopted, foreseeing the establishment of the Ministry of eGovernance.

With the subsequent amendments to the Law on eGovernment (in force since February 2022), the State eGovernment Agency for Electronic Government (SEGA) was abolished, and the Information Technology Directorate was transferred from the Ministry of Transport and Communications to the newly established Ministry of eGovernance.

The Ministry of eGovernment has taken over the powers and functions of the Chairman of the State eGovernment Agency and has incorporated the Information Technology Directorate within the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The powers under the Cybersecurity Act have also been transferred to the Minister of eGovernment.

Among the main priorities of the new Ministry are: (i) electronic identification; (ii) interoperability; (iii) digitalisation of registries; and (iv) increasing the quality of eServices for citizens and businesses.

### Digital Decade Council

In 2022, the Digital Decade Council was established as part of the Council of Ministers. Its purpose is to ensure effective coordination, cooperation and consultation for developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating State policies related to digital transformation in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The chairperson is the Minister of Electronic Government. The members include: all Ministers, the Chief Secretary of the Council of Ministers, the president of the National Statistical Institute, the chairperson of the Communications Regulation Commission, the president of the Archives State Agency, the executive director of the Institute of Public Administration and the chairperson of the Management Board of the National Association of the Municipalities in Republic of Bulgaria.

A Permanent Working Group is set up within the Council, with the option to create temporary working groups as needed to achieve specific objectives and/or results. The Digital Decade Council is a suitable and efficient tool to tackle challenges and accomplish digital transformation through a centralized and coordinated approach. This involves clearly defined goals and principles, along with the active involvement of the State.

The Digital Decade Council will ensure the effective and high-quality participation of the Bulgarian side in the development, implementation and reporting of the measures and activities included in the Digital Decade Policy Programme 2030.

### ICT Council

The ICT Council consists of representatives of organisations from the ICT sector and assists the Digital Decade Council in implementing eGovernment policies.

### Ministry of Innovation and Growth

A [Decision of the National Assembly of 13 December 2021](#) on the adoption of a structure of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria established the [Ministry of Innovation and Growth](#). The Minister of Innovation and Growth develops, organises, coordinates and supervises the implementation of the State policy in the field of innovation, technological and economic development and growth of the Republic of Bulgaria.



## Council for Administrative Reform

The Council for Administrative Reform coordinates the government policy for the general management of the State administration.

## Cybersecurity Council

Following the provision laid down in the Cybersecurity Act, a Cybersecurity Council was established with advisory, coordination and control functions on the development and implementation of cybersecurity policies within the Council of Ministers. For the functioning of the Cybersecurity Council, a Decree of the Council of Ministers was adopted, regulating its organisation and activities.

The Cybersecurity Council assists the government in performing its cybersecurity organisation, management and control tasks, which include network and information security, cybercrime and cyberdefence.

The Council includes the Ministers for Interior, Defence, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Transport, Health, Environment, Energy, the Chief of Defence, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior, the President of the State Agency for National Security (SANS), the Chair of the State Intelligence Agency (SIA), the Chair of the State eGovernment Agency, the Secretary of the Cybersecurity Council within the Council of Ministers, and a representative of the President.

The Head of State, the Prime Minister and the Parliament Chair may participate *in propria persona* in the Cybersecurity Council. In certain cases, chairs of standing committees of the National Assembly, members of Parliament, heads of institutions and organisations may also participate.

The above-mentioned composition on one hand guarantees the necessary involvement at political level and, on the other, creates the right conditions for the Council to operate effectively.

The Cybersecurity Council holds regular meetings at least once a year, with the option of additional ad-hoc meetings. Representatives of various State bodies and of professional and civic organisations, as well as experts, may be invited to attend the Council meetings.

Pursuant the amendments to the Electronic Governance Act from February 2022, the Minister of eGovernment is the Chairman of the Cybersecurity Council.

## Inter-Institutional Spatial Data Council

The Geospatial Data Act regulates the structure and tasks of the Inter-Institutional Spatial Data Council. The Council includes members, appointed by executive authorities, who are primary spatial data controllers. According to the amendments to the Electronic Governance Act, published in item 15/2022 of the State Gazette, in force since 22 February 2022, the Minister of eGovernment or an authorized official is the Chair of the Council, and the Deputy Chairs are the Deputy Minister for the Environment and Waters and the Deputy Minister for Regional Development and Public Works, or their duly authorised officials. The functions and activities of the Inter-Institutional Spatial Data Council (ISDC) are regulated by the rules of procedure, structure and organisation of the ISDC. Information about the ISDC is also published on the Council of Ministers' Advisory Councils portal. The Council is supported by an expert working group and other relevant working subgroups.

## National Computer Security Incidents Response Team

The National Computer Security Incidents Response Team (CERT)'s mission is to provide information, support and assistance to its constituencies in order to reduce the risks of computer security incidents as well as to respond to such incidents at the time of occurrence. The team maintains a database that offers information on how Bulgarian citizens and businesses can make their IT environment more secure.

## Institute of Public Administration

The Bulgarian Institute of Public Administration was established in 2000 under the Civil Servant Act. The Institute has the status of an executive agency under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Bulgaria and is the leading institution for the training of civil servants, including in the field of eGovernment, information and communication technologies and cybersecurity.

## Commission for Personal Data Protection

The Commission for Personal Data Protection is an independent State body responsible for supervising the observance of the Law for Protection of Personal Data and protecting individuals with regard to the processing of their personal data, while also providing access to these data.



## Big Data for Smart Society Institute

A **Big Data for Smart Society Institute (GATE)** has been established. For a year, the Institute has been working on a pilot project for the creation of digital twins of Lozenets district in the municipality of Sofia. The GATE's Digital Twin Lab is designed to create and demonstrate the so-called digital twins of industrial/business processes and products. The laboratory includes an intelligent platform for interdisciplinary collaboration in the development of new tools, applications and technologies for automation, production, customisation and management in the industry. The laboratory supports research activities for digital modelling and application of digital twins, applicable to various business scenarios such as customer management, production process management, decision support. It will also actively support the development of 'Cities of the Future' and 'Smart Industry'.

## National Centre for High-Performance and Distributed Computing

The Ministry of Education and Science also continues to support the development of the **National Centre for High-performance and Distributed Computing under the National Research Infrastructure Roadmap**. It receives annual funding for development and operational costs. The centre integrates several systems – the Avitohol Supercomputer and the high-performance grid cluster of the Institute of Information and Communication Technologies to the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, the SU-GRID and PhysOn HPC clusters of the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and the LinBladeTU cluster of the Technical University – Sofia. The systems are openly accessible for researchers and other public and private users. The centre organizes many trainings, addressed also to university students and users.

## Institute for Compute Science, Artificial Intelligence and Technology

In May 2022, the Bulgarian government launched the **Institute for Compute Science, Artificial Intelligence and Technology (INSAIT)**. The objective of INSAIT is to be a leading AI and computer science research and education institution. As defined in the **National Strategic Framework for the Development of AI in Bulgaria by 2030**, INSAIT focuses on scientific and technological excellence, performing research, attracting national and international academic professionals, while offering training to graduate and undergraduate students. The Bulgarian government expects INSAIT to bring forward a positive change to society and economy at large by attracting talents, preventing brain drain, creating new educational programmes, inventing high-value intellectual property (IP), and attracting technological companies as well as leading business actors.

## Subnational (Federal, Regional and Local)

### Regions and Municipalities

Regions and municipalities are involved in the implementation of various eGovernment activities of local interest. More specifically, they conduct activities related to the delivery of electronic services through the horizontal eGovernment systems. These include eDelivery, ePayment, and eForms for requesting eServices. The administrations have the opportunity to join the single model for requesting, paying for and providing electronic administrative services, which is now being managed by the Ministry of eGovernance.

Local eGovernment developments are coordinated by municipalities, which are the local self-government bodies in Bulgaria. The **National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria** is the organisation that represents local authorities nationally.

### Local Office Coordination

Coordination and sharing activities between base registers are concluded both at central level and decentralised levels.

For some registers, data are gathered through local offices and forwarded to national registers, as is the case for the Civil Register, where data are gathered and administered through local municipal offices.

### Commission for Personal Data Protection

The **Commission for Personal Data Protection** also oversees compliance with the **Law for Protection of Personal Data** by the local self-government authorities.

## 8. Cross border Digital Public Administration Services for Citizens and Businesses



Further to the information on national digital public services provided in the previous chapters, this final chapter presents an overview of the basic cross-border public services provided to citizens and businesses in other European countries. [Your Europe](#) is taken as reference, as it is the EU one-stop shop which aims to simplify the life of both citizens and businesses by avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and red tape in regard to 'life and travel', as well as 'doing business' abroad. In order to do so, Your Europe offers information on basic rights under EU law, but also on how these rights are implemented in each individual country (where information has been provided by the national authorities). Free email or telephone contact with EU assistance services, to get more personalised or detailed help and advice is also available.

Please note that, in most cases, the EU rights described in Your Europe apply to all EU member countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, and sometimes to Switzerland. Information on Your Europe is provided by the relevant departments of the European Commission and complemented by content provided by the authorities of every country it covers. As the website consists of two sections - one for citizens and one for businesses, both managed by DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW) - below the main groups of services for each section are listed.

### Life and Travel

For citizens, the following groups of services can be found on the website:

- [Travel](#) (e.g. Documents needed for travelling in Europe);
- [Work and retirement](#) (e.g. Unemployment and Benefits);
- [Vehicles](#) (e.g. Registration);
- [Residence formalities](#) (e.g. Elections abroad);
- [Education and youth](#) (e.g. Researchers);
- [Health](#) (e.g. Medical Treatment abroad);
- [Family](#) (e.g. Couples);
- [Consumers](#) (e.g. Shopping).

### Doing Business

Regarding businesses, the groups of services on the website concern:

- [Running a business](#) (e.g. Developing a business);
- [Taxation](#) (e.g. Business tax);
- [Selling in the EU](#) (e.g. Public contracts);
- [Human Resources](#) (e.g. Employment contracts);
- [Product requirements](#) (e.g. Standards);
- [Financing and Funding](#) (e.g. Accounting);
- [Dealing with Customers](#) (e.g. Data protection).

## The Digital Public Administration Factsheets

The factsheets present an overview of the state and progress of Digital Public Administration and Interoperability within European countries.

The factsheets are published on the Joinup platform, which is a joint initiative by the Directorate General for Digital Services (DG DIGIT) and the Directorate General for Communications Networks, Content & Technology (DG CONNECT).



*The Digital Public Administration Factsheets are prepared for the European Commission by Wavestone.*

## An action supported by Interoperable Europe

The ISA<sup>2</sup> Programme has evolved into [Interoperable Europe](#) - the initiative of the European Commission for a reinforced interoperability policy.

The work of the European Commission and its partners in public administrations across Europe to enhance interoperability continues at full speed despite the end of the ISA<sup>2</sup> programme. Indeed, enhanced interoperability will be necessary to unlock the potential of data use and reuse for improved public services, to enable cross-border collaboration, and to support the sector-specific policy goals set by the Commission for the future.

Interoperable Europe will lead the process of achieving these goals and creating a reinforced interoperability policy that will work for everyone. The initiative is supported by the [Digital Europe Programme](#).

## Follow us



@InteroperableEurope  
@Joinup\_eu



Interoperable Europe

**interoperable**  
europe  
innovation ∞ govtech ∞ community