

***UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR 2012 FOR TRAVELERS  
TRANSITING THE TERRITORY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA BY  
AUTOMOBILE, AIRPLANE AND TRAIN***

**IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS:**

***The telephone number, which you can use in emergency situations all over Europe, is 112 . Please dial 112 free of charge to connect with the emergency services in every EU Member State and from every stationary or mobile telephone.***

**First aid for motor vehicles - 0291146**

**Sofia Airport – flight information - + 359 2 937 22 11, 12**

**National telephone number for information** on arrivals/departures of trains and buses + 359 2 191 929 /666

***Crossing the border checkpoints of the Republic of Bulgaria***

Border checks of travelers crossing all border checkpoints in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria are performed in compliance with the regulations of the European Community. The conditions for entry, residence and exit of foreign citizens are regulated in the Foreign Nationals Act of the Republic of Bulgaria.

According to these regulations, **third-country nationals** are subject to thorough border checks of whether they fulfill the entry requirements. Besides the check for authenticity and validity of passports, a main element of the entry control procedure is the check of the **purpose** of the planned stay, which has to be verified through supporting documents.

According to Article 19 of the Foreign Nationals Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, **third-country citizens entering the Republic of Bulgaria or transiting its territory must possess the following documents, depending on the purpose of their travel:**

- ◆ A regular document for traveling abroad or another substituting document, as well as a visa, whenever necessary;
- ◆ Sufficient funds for their subsistence depending on the duration and the conditions of their stay in the Republic of Bulgaria, and also for returning to their country of permanent residence or transiting the Republic of Bulgaria;
- ◆ Medical insurance and other insurances as required;

- ◆ A standard letter of invitation (if required);
- ◆ Other documents proving the purpose of the travel.

According to the same law, upon entering the country, foreigners are obliged to **declare the purpose of their visit**, while officials performing border checks at border checkpoints are obliged to check the fulfillment of all requirements for entry of a foreign national into the territory of the country, including the existence of supporting documents and their compliance with the purpose of the travel as declared by the individual.

**In case of establishing a violation, Border Police officers have the following rights:**

- not to allow the entry of foreign citizens into the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria;
- to draw up a protocol for an established administrative offence;
- to search travelers individually;
- to seize irregular documents of individuals and motor vehicles;
- to detain persons and motor vehicles for committed crimes.

**Border Police officers are not allowed to take any money or objects from the individuals crossing the state border.**

In case of established irregularities or incorrect attitude on behalf of Border Police officials, signals may be communicated at telephone number + 359 2 983 1865, or the e-mail address: [nsgp@mvr.bg](mailto:nsgp@mvr.bg) . The address of the Border Police where written signals may be sent by mail, is 1202 Sofia, 46 Maria Louisa Boulevard.

When you would like to submit a signal, regardless of the means of communication to be used, you must include the following specific data: date, time and border checkpoint which has been crossed, full name, unique citizen number, number plate of the motor vehicle, content of the complaint and description of the type of irregularities committed against you.

## **WHAT YOU MUST KNOW WHEN TRAVELING BY A MOTOR VEHICLE:**

Motor vehicle drivers, crossing the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria or another European country, ***must carry the following documents at all times:***

- ◆ - certificate for the registration of the motor vehicle;

- ◆ - driving license for the motor vehicle;
- ◆ - the driver must possess a document of authorization for driving the vehicle endorsed by a notary, if the owner of the motor vehicle is not present;
- ◆ - when the motor vehicle is owned by a legal entity, the required documents are an ordinance for a business travel, a labor contract or a letter of authorization for leaving the country;
  - a mandatory Civil Liability insurance policy and an international Green Card automobile insurance for the countries where it is required.

### **Motor Vehicle Driving License**

The individuals who possess a motor vehicle driving license issued by an EU Member State, Iceland, Norway or Switzerland, are allowed to drive a motor vehicle if they meet the requirements for the minimum age for the respective category of the motor vehicle determined in the national legislation of these countries.

A person may possess only one motor vehicle driving license issued by an EU Member State.

### **Automobile Insurance**

When traveling in EU Member States, the automobile insurance automatically ensures the minimum coverage (mandatory Civil Liability insurance), as required by the law. This is also in force for Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. If you have full insurance in your country, you must check whether it is also in force for traveling to other countries.

The “Green Card” is not mandatory for traveling in the EU but is an internationally recognized proof of insurance and facilitates the arrangement of claims having occurred in case of accidents. If you do not carry a Green Card, you should have your insurance contract with you.

### **Safe Driving**

The use of safety belts for all seats, is mandatory in all European countries. Safety belts must also be used by passengers in tourist buses or minivans.

Children safety equipment must be ensured accordingly for children in cars and if possible, also in other motor vehicles.

Use of mobile phones, without “Hands free”, when driving, increases significantly the risk of car accidents and is either directly or indirectly prohibited in all European countries.

Although in most EU Member States the maximum allowed amount of alcohol in blood is up to 0, 5 mg/ml, in other countries it varies between 0, 2 mg/ml and 0,8 mg/ml, while in some countries it is not allowed to have any alcohol in blood when driving.

**We strongly recommend to avoid consuming alcohol or other intoxicating substances before and during driving!**

*When you travel by automobile, please check the speed limits in the different countries and whether any special conditions are in force. You may obtain this information on the following Internet addresses:*

[http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/going\\_abroad/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/going_abroad/index_en.htm) ;

<https://www.tispol.org> ( Country Driving Guides ) .

***REQUIREMENTS AND SANCTIONS ACCORDING TO THE TRAFFIC CONTROL ACT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA:***

**A. Speed limits along the roads of the Republic of Bulgaria**

	In a populated area	Outside an area	Highway	Speedway
Category A	50	80	100	90
Category B	50	90	140	120
Categories C, D	50	80	100	90
Categories B+E, C+E, D+E	50	70	100	90
Category T	50	50 -		
Category M	45	45 -		

**B. Sanctions**

When the maximum allowed speed has been exceeded by more than 31 km/h three or more times in a period of one year from the date of entry into force of the traffic ticket or the electronic fiche imposing a sanction for the same kind of violation, the driver of the motor vehicle is sanctioned with the fine envisaged

for the respective violation in a double amount and deprivation of the right to drive a motor vehicle for a period of six months.

### **C. Sanctions for other violations for the drivers and passengers in the vehicles on the roads of the Republic of Bulgaria:**

**A sanction/Fines/ amounting to BGN 200 shall be imposed** on a person who has unlawfully (having no permit to do so) parked a vehicle on a place designated for a vehicle servicing people with disabilities, or for a vehicle adapted and managed by people with disabilities

**A sanction /Fines/ amounting to BGN 100 shall be imposed on drivers for:**

- running a red traffic light
- not giving preference to walkers on a foot - path

*In the case of repeating of any of the above violations within 1 year the driver shall be fined to pay BGN 200 and a disqualification to drive a motor vehicle for a period of one month shall be imposed on him/her*

**A sanction /Fines/ amounting BGN 50 is imposed in the following cases:**

- ◆ Driving a motor vehicle in the BUS lane without having the right to do so;
- ◆ Driving a motor vehicle with worn out or torn tires;
- ◆ Use of mobile telephone while driving without using “Hands free” device;
- ◆ Not using safety belt or helmet;
- ◆ Stay or parking in the active lane of movement next to stopped motor vehicles in the direction of movement.

### **Sanctions for driving after consuming alcohol:**

A. For driving a motor vehicle with alcohol concentration in the blood from 0,5 to 1,2 per mill , the driving license is suspended for a period from 6 up to 12 months, and the fine is between BGN 500 and 1000.

B. A fine of BGN 2000 and suspension of the driving license for a period of 2 /two/ years is imposed on every driver who refuses to be tested for alcohol or narcotics substances.

### **Vignettes**

While driving along the roads of the Republic of Bulgaria, the drivers of all types of motor vehicles are obliged to stick a valid vignette sticker for a paid

vignette tax at the bottom right corner of the front windshield, as well as to remove it when its validity expires.

The motor vehicles on the road should be equipped with a reflective vest, safety triangle, first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

### **Important information for persons without a permanent address in the Republic of Bulgaria**

Pursuant to the Law for Administrative Offences and Sanctions, in case the offender has no permanent address in the Republic of Bulgaria, an administrative penal protocol is drawn up for the offence. The written explanations or objections of the driver of the motor vehicle must be attached to the protocol.

In case a traffic ticket is issued for imposing a sanction to an offender without a permanent address in the Republic of Bulgaria, the offender pays the fine to a bank account quoted in the traffic ticket.

## **CUSTOMS REQUIREMENTS**

There is no limit of the money carried in cash or other noncash means of payment such as checks and shares, when entering or exiting the EU. In case of sums over EUR 10 000 they have to be declared before the customs authorities.

In connection with the entry into force since midnight on 10.12.2011 of the amendments to the Currency Law, the following information should be taken into account:

- When carrying means of payment at the amount of EUR 10 000 or more across the border of a country which is external border of the EU (to or from a third country), it is obligatory to declare them.
- When carrying means of payment at the amount of EUR 10 000 or more across the border of Bulgaria or another EU Member State, the person declares them when it is requested by the customs authorities.
- In case of reasonable doubts related to illegal activities, even in transfer of means of payment under EUR 10 000, the customs authorities perform control of the natural persons and request from them to present information related to these means of payment. The customs authorities enter the information in a

register ex officio. This is done when means of payment are transferred both to third countries and the EU Member States.

A certificate from the National Revenue Agency of the presence or lack of debts of the persons is required when means of payment at the amount of BGN 30 000 or more are transferred to a third country.

In cases of import and export of precious metals and stones and goods made with or from them across the border of the country which is an EU external border (to or from a third country), it is obligatory to declare them.

When importing and exporting precious metals and stones and goods made with or from them across the state border to or from a EU Member State, they are declared when it is requested by the customs authorities.

### **Entry in Bulgaria of third-country nationals**

Passengers coming from third countries can import goods for personal use in the framework of the quantities and values indicated below without any tax levied on them, as far as they are not meant either for trade, or professional activity, and are not subject to prohibitions and restrictions for import or transit crossing:

#### **Air travel:**

**Tobacco products:** 200 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos; 50 cigars or 250 gr. tobacco.

#### **Land travel or water travel by car, train, steamboat:**

**Tobacco products:** 40 cigarettes or 20 cigarillos; 10 cigars or 50 gr. tobacco.

#### **When crossing the air, land or maritime border of Bulgaria:**

- Alcohol drinks: 1 liter alcohol drinks with over 22% alcohol content or 2 liters of wine/sparkling wine with alcohol content;
- Perfume: 50 gr.
- Eau de toilette: 250 ml.
- Fuel: If it is in the reservoir of your vehicle or in a portable container – up to the total volume of 10 liters.

**Other goods:** Up to the total value of EUR 430 (when crossing the air and land border) and up to EUR 300 (when crossing the land border).

For additional information:

Customs Agency, Sofia 1202, 47 Rakovski Str.

e-mail: [pr@customs.bg](mailto:pr@customs.bg)

*We wish you a pleasant and safe travel!*