

Studying in Bulgaria

A guide for international students & families — how Bulgarian higher education works, the Certificate of Eligibility, the Type D visa and residence permit, affordable English medicine, and work.

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

AFFORDABLE EU, A HUB FOR ENGLISH MEDICINE

Bulgaria is one of Europe's most affordable EU study destinations and a popular hub for **English-taught medicine, dentistry, and pharmacy** at its Medical Universities (Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Pleven). Non-EU students need a **Ministry Certificate of Eligibility, a Type D visa, and a residence permit**. Living costs are among the lowest in the EU. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. Bulgarian rules, tuition, and the funds requirement change. The figures here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Bulgarian embassy, the Migration Directorate, and your university**.

Understand Why Students Choose Bulgaria

WHAT TO KNOW

Bulgaria offers **affordable EU degrees, a strong reputation for English-taught medicine/dentistry/pharmacy, very low living costs, and a warm, welcoming culture** — with EU-recognized qualifications and easy travel across Europe.

BY THE NUMBERS

English medicine

Medical Universities

Very affordable

low living costs

EU-recognized

degrees

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Bulgaria's **affordable EU degrees and strong medical programs** against learning some Bulgarian for daily life — for English-taught medicine especially, it's excellent value.

GOOD TO KNOW

Bulgaria is a **popular, affordable hub for English-taught medicine** — a major draw for international students.

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

Bulgaria's leading institutions include **Sofia University** (the oldest and largest), the **Medical Universities** of Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, and Pleven, and the **Technical University of Sofia**. Degrees follow the European (Bologna) structure; medicine is a 6-year integrated MD.

BY THE NUMBERS

Sofia University

oldest & largest

Medical Universities

Sofia/Plovdiv/Varna/Pleven

Medicine

6-year MD

HOW TO HELP

Choose by field — Sofia University for breadth, a Medical University for health sciences, Technical University for engineering — and confirm the language of instruction.

GOOD TO KNOW

Bulgaria's **Medical Universities** are the main draw for international students — well-regarded, EU-recognized medical degrees in English.

Get the Certificate of Eligibility & Visa

WHAT TO KNOW

Two key steps: your university helps you obtain a **Certificate of Eligibility from the Ministry of Education**, then you apply for a **long-stay (Type D) student visa** at a Bulgarian embassy. The Type D visa lets you enter and is the prerequisite for the residence permit.

BY THE NUMBERS

Certificate of Eligibility

from the Ministry

Type D visa

at the embassy

Prerequisite

for the permit

HOW TO HELP

Get your **Ministry Certificate of Eligibility** (the university facilitates it) and university acceptance, then apply for the **Type D visa** with funds proof, insurance, and a medical certificate.

WATCH OUT

The **Ministry Certificate of Eligibility** plus your acceptance letter are essential for the Type D visa — the university helps arrange them.

Get Your Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving on the Type D visa, all students staying over 90 days must apply for a **Long Term Residence Permit (ID card) at the Migration Directorate** (in Sofia or the local police). It's issued for one year (non-EU) and renewable; a temporary certificate is issued first, with the card following in ~3 weeks.

BY THE NUMBERS

Long Term Residence Permit
the ID card

Migration Directorate
Sofia/local police

1 year
renewable

HOW TO HELP

Apply for your **Long Term Residence Permit at the Migration Directorate** after arrival, with accommodation, funds, insurance, and proof of paid tuition — the card follows in about three weeks.

WATCH OUT

Apply for the **residence permit within 90 days** of arrival — it's required to stay legally beyond the visa.

Plan for Tuition & Funding

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU tuition is **affordable**: typically **€3,000–8,000/year**, with **medicine around €8,000/year** — well below Western Europe or the U.S. Scholarships are available through universities and government programs.

BY THE NUMBERS

Non-EU

~€3,000–8,000/yr

Medicine

~€8,000/yr

Scholarships

university & government

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **non-EU tuition** (medicine is the outlier at ~€8,000) plus very low living costs, and pursue university and government scholarships.

GOOD TO KNOW

Bulgaria's **living costs are among the lowest in the EU** — a real advantage even where medical tuition is higher.

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa/permit you must prove **sufficient funds** — commonly around **4,000 BGN (~€2,000) per year** in a bank account, plus tuition — along with **health insurance** and a medical certificate. Some sources cite higher amounts, so confirm.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds

~4,000 BGN (~€2,000)/yr

+ tuition

proven/paid

+ insurance

& medical certificate

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** at the current amount (a bank certificate), plus tuition, **health insurance**, and a medical certificate — all required for the visa and permit.

WATCH OUT

The exact funds figure **varies by source and embassy** — confirm the current amount with your Bulgarian embassy before applying.



Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Programs are taught in **Bulgarian** or **English** (proof via **TOEFL, IELTS, or a Bulgarian language test**, depending on the program). Some Bulgarian helps daily life. Medical programs may include a preparatory year for language and sciences.

BY THE NUMBERS

Bulgarian or English

by program

English

TOEFL/IELTS

Some Bulgarian

helps daily life

HOW TO HELP

Prove **English (TOEFL/IELTS)** or **Bulgarian** as your program requires, and learn some Bulgarian — it helps daily life, and a preparatory year is available for some medical programs.

GOOD TO KNOW

Some medical programs offer a **preparatory year** (language and sciences) — useful if you need to build up first.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

Have documents **apostilled/legalized and translated into Bulgarian**. After arriving, complete your **residence permit, confirm health insurance, and open a bank account** (often required for the funds deposit). Living costs are very low (€400–800/month).

BY THE NUMBERS

Apostille + translate

into Bulgarian

Residence permit

at the Migration Directorate

Very low costs

€400–800/mo

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **apostilled, Bulgarian-translated documents**, complete your residence permit and insurance, and open a local bank account — then enjoy Bulgaria's very low living costs.

GOOD TO KNOW

You'll often need a **local bank account with the required deposit** for the residence permit — arrange it early.

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU students on a study visa/permit may work **up to 20 hours per week during the academic year without a separate work permit**, and full-time during official holidays. After graduation, a separate work authorization is required.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work

20 hrs/week in term

No permit

during studies

After graduation

separate authorization

HOW TO HELP

You may work **up to 20 hours/week without a separate permit** during your studies (full-time in holidays) — useful for experience, though a work authorization is needed after graduating.

GOOD TO KNOW

Work rights during study don't automatically extend past graduation — you'll need a separate work authorization to keep working.

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Bulgaria's **EU-recognized degrees (Bologna)** — including medical degrees under EU rules — support careers across Europe. After graduating, you can pursue a work authorization or the EU Blue Card for skilled roles.

BY THE NUMBERS

EU-recognized

degrees

Medicine

EU recognition routes

After

work authorization/Blue Card

HOW TO HELP

Leverage your **EU-recognized degree** (medicine especially) for opportunities across Europe, and pursue a work authorization or EU Blue Card after graduating — confirming current conditions.

GOOD TO KNOW

Bulgarian **medical degrees benefit from EU recognition** routes — valuable for practicing across Europe, subject to each country's rules.

Studying in Bulgaria: The Essentials

A snapshot — figures change, so confirm everything with the Bulgarian embassy, the Migration Directorate, and your university.

The system

Sofia University (oldest/largest), the Medical Universities of Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, and Pleven, and the Technical University of Sofia; EU-recognized (Bologna); medicine is a 6-year MD.

Certificate & visa

Non-EU students need a Certificate of Eligibility from the Ministry of Education (facilitated by the university), then a long-stay (Type D) student visa at a Bulgarian embassy.

Residence permit

After arrival, apply within 90 days for a Long Term Residence Permit (ID card) at the Migration Directorate; issued for one year (non-EU) and renewable.

Money

Non-EU tuition ~€3,000–8,000/year (medicine ~€8,000); prove funds (commonly ~4,000 BGN/~€2,000/year, plus tuition) with health insurance and a medical certificate; living costs among the EU's lowest.

Work & after

Work up to 20 hrs/week without a permit during study (full-time in holidays); a separate work authorization is required after graduation; EU-recognized degrees (medicine especially).

YOUR BULGARIAN JOURNEY STARTS HERE

Find Your Community.

Explore our other Studying in [Country] guides, Top Universities by Country, and country guides — among **1,297 free resources**.

tools.k12academics.com →

