

THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY RANKING SYSTEM

HIGHER EDUCATION IN BULGARIA



- The Republic of Bulgaria has 51 higher education **institutions**, of which 38 are public and 13 are private.
- Higher education institutions in Bulgaria offer over 600 degree programmes **across** 52 professional fields.
- Study towards the educational and research degree of Doctor takes place through doctoral programmes.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN BULGARIA



- The system is regulated by the Higher Education Act (HEA), adopted in 1995.

- Institutions are governed in accordance with their academic autonomy, while the state supports the development of modern institutional governance.

HIGHER EDUCATION IN BULGARIA

- 51 higher education institutions:
- 38 public higher education institutions
- 13 private higher education institutions
- 52 professional fields
- over 600 degree programmes

TYPES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN BULGARIA

- Comprehensive universities:
- St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo
- Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv
- Angel Kanchev University of Ruse
- Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski
- Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen
- South-West University Neofit Rilski, Blagoevgrad

TYPES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN BULGARIA

- Medical universities:
- Medical University of Varna
- Medical University of Pleven
- Medical University of Plovdiv
- Medical University of Sofia
- Trakia University, Stara Zagora
- Burgas State University Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov

- Technical universities:
- Technical University of Varna
- Technical University of Gabrovo
- Technical University of Sofia

TYPES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN BULGARIA

- Higher education institutions in arts and sport:
- Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts Prof. Asen Diamandiev, Plovdiv
- Krastyo Sarafov National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts, Sofia
- National Academy of Music Prof. Pancho Vladigerov, Sofia
- Vassil Levski National Sports Academy, Sofia
- National Academy of Art, Sofia

- Higher education institutions in economics:
- University of National and World Economy, Sofia
- University of Economics, Varna
- D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov

TYPES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN BULGARIA

- Specialised higher education institutions:
- Agricultural University, Plovdiv
- Lyuben Karavelov University of Structural Engineering and Architecture, Sofia
- Todor Kableshkov University of Transport, Sofia
- University of Telecommunications and Post, Sofia
- University of Forestry, Sofia
- University of Mining and Geology St. Ivan Rilski, Sofia
- University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy, Sofia
- University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, Sofia
- University of Food Technologies, Plovdiv
- University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy, Sofia

Higher education follows completed secondary education and comprises the following degrees:

- FIRST CYCLE
  - **Professional Bachelor in …:** an educational qualification with at least 180 credits and a minimum study period of 3 years;
  - **Bachelor:** an educational qualification with at least 240 credits and a minimum study period of 4 years;
- SECOND CYCLE – **Master:** an educational qualification with at least 300 credits over 5 years; or at least one year after a Bachelor degree (60 credits);
- THIRD CYCLE – **Doctor:** an educational and research degree with a minimum study period of 3 years after a Master degree.

MODES OF STUDY



- The HEA provides for 4 modes of student study: full-time, part-time, evening and distance learning.

- Doctoral study at higher education institutions and research organisations: full-time, part-time, distance learning and independent study.

APPLICATIONS

1. Under intergovernmental programmes for educational, scientific and cultural exchange;

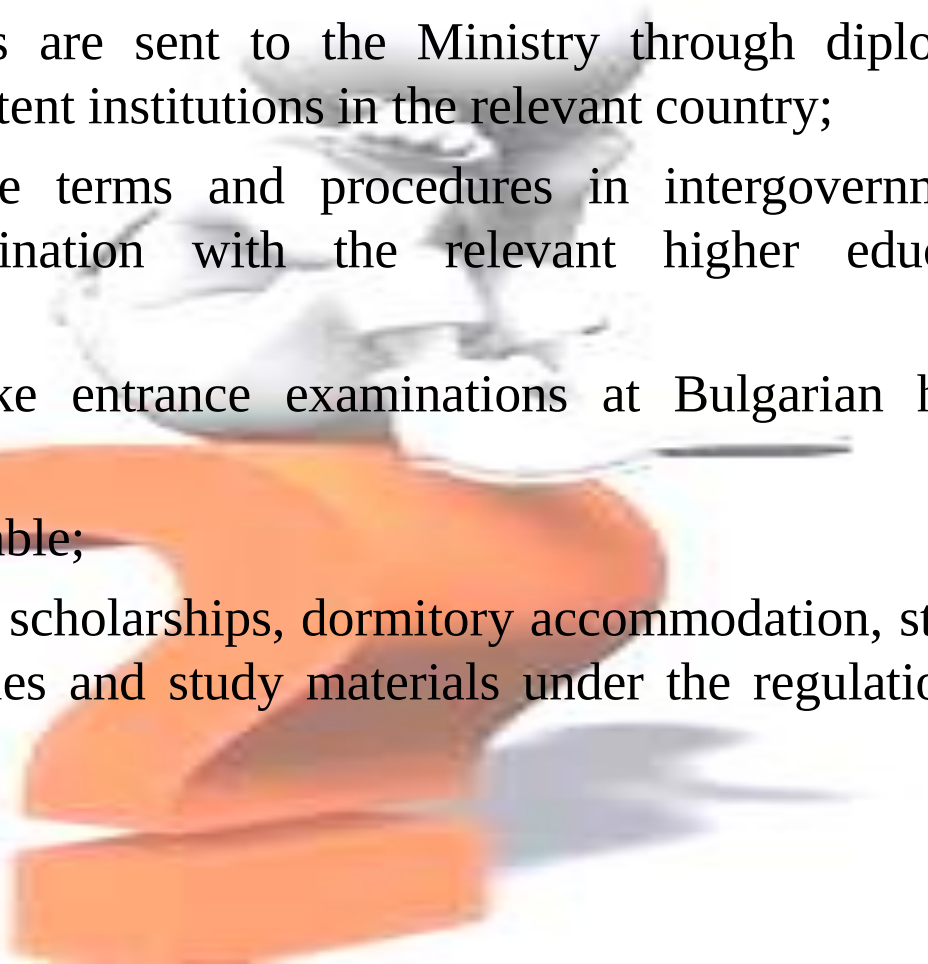
2. Under Council of Ministers regulations (Decrees No. 103/1993 and No. 228/1997): successful applicants are nominated by the Ministry of Education and Science.

3. Under Article 68(7) of the HEA: citizens of EU and EEA member states are admitted under the same terms and procedures as Bulgarian citizens.

4. Foreign nationals outside the above categories may apply for fee-paying study. Admission is based on the applicable document and programme requirements, with annual tuition fees set for foreign nationals.

APPLICATIONS II

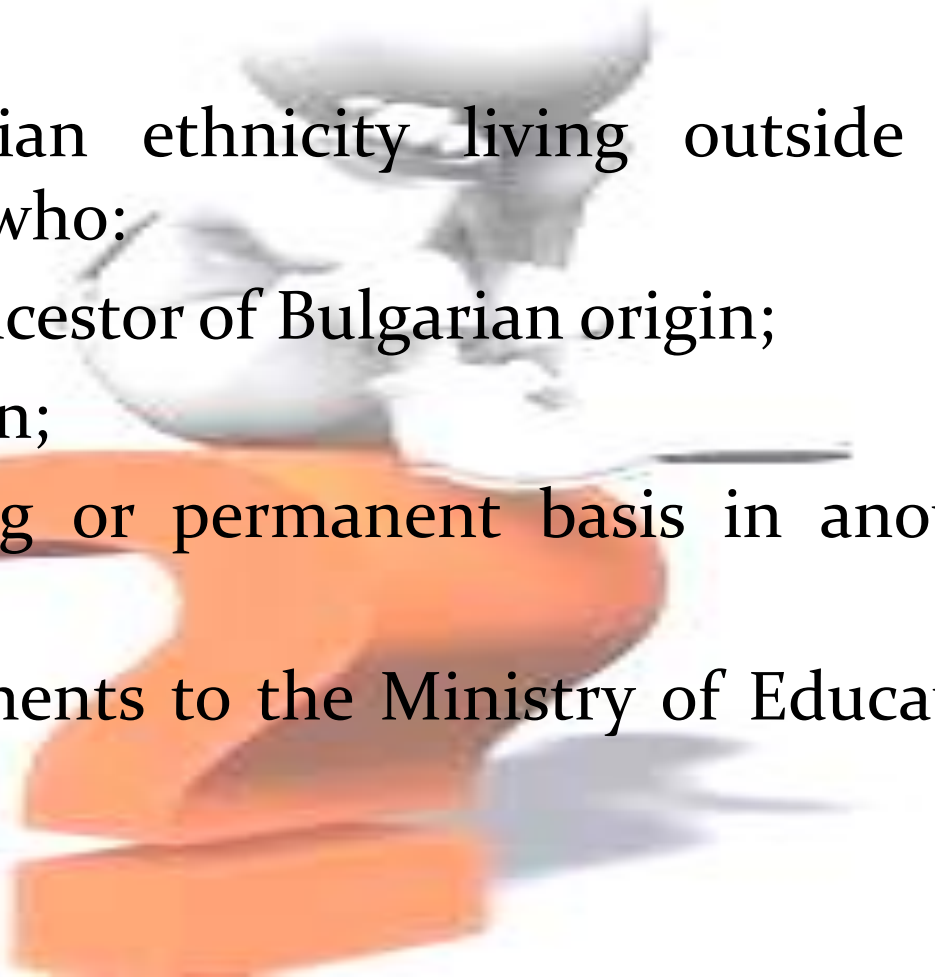
1. Intergovernmental programmes for educational, scientific and cultural exchange
   - Application documents are sent to the Ministry through diplomatic channels via the competent institutions in the relevant country;
   - Admission follows the terms and procedures in intergovernmental documents, in coordination with the relevant higher education institutions;
   - Applicants do not take entrance examinations at Bulgarian higher education institutions;
   - No tuition fees are payable;
   - Students are entitled to scholarships, dormitory accommodation, student dining facilities, libraries and study materials under the regulations in force in Bulgaria.



APPLICATIONS III

2. Under Council of Ministers regulations: Decree No. 103/1993

- Persons of Bulgarian ethnicity living outside the Republic of Bulgaria who:
  - Have at least one ancestor of Bulgarian origin;
  - Identify as Bulgarian;
  - Reside on a lasting or permanent basis in another country;
- Submit their documents to the Ministry of Education and Science.



APPLICATIONS IV

- A test in Bulgarian language, literature and Bulgarian history, or specialised examinations at the relevant higher education institution;

- Special admission provisions for Olympiad winners and outstanding school graduates follow the current annual Ministry rules.

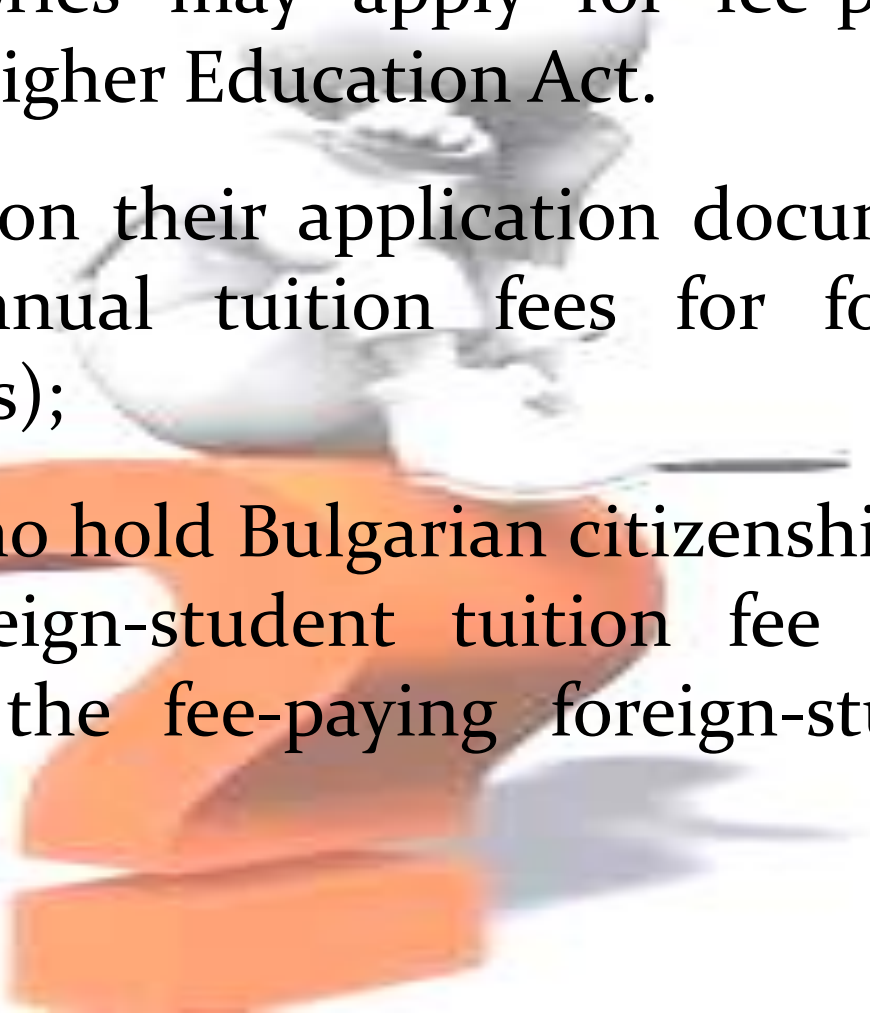
- Under Decree No. 103/1993, eligible students from Albania, Kosovo, Moldova, North Macedonia, Ukraine, Serbia and Kazakhstan are exempt from tuition fees. Other cases follow the applicable fee rules.

- Entitlement to scholarships, student dormitories and dining facilities.

APPLICATIONS V

4. Foreign applicants outside the preferential admission categories may apply for fee-paying study under the Higher Education Act.

- They are ranked on their application documents and pay the annual tuition fees for foreign nationals (in euros);
- Dual nationals who hold Bulgarian citizenship pay 50% of the foreign-student tuition fee when admitted under the fee-paying foreign-student route.



APPLICATIONS VI

- Applicants do not take entrance examinations at the relevant higher education institutions;
- The deadline for applications to Bachelor and Master programmes after secondary education is 1 October of the application year. For Master programmes after a Bachelor or Master degree, the deadline is the start of the summer semester of the relevant academic year;
- The higher education institution decides whether to approve applicants and sends their documents to the Ministry of Education and Science.

BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY RANKING SYSTEM



- Access to extensive data on Bulgarian higher education in Bulgarian and English: https://rsvu.mon.bg/
- More opportunities for applicants to make informed choices;
- A basis for comparing higher education institutions.

NACID: RECOGNITION FOR ADMISSION

- Applicants with foreign secondary education request a recognition certificate for entry to Bulgarian higher education (service 3436).
- The certificate includes the subjects and grades shown in the school diploma, converted to the Bulgarian grading scale.
- If admission requires grades found only in a separate transcript or other document, request grade equivalence under service 3434.
- Check the chosen university's required subjects and admission deadlines before preparing the application.

Source: NACID official guidance • checked 14 October 2026

PREPARING THE DOCUMENTS

- Complete the application and state that recognition is needed for admission to higher education.
- Provide the secondary school diploma and, if the diploma does not establish this right, proof that it permits access to higher education.
- Prepare additional grade records where subject-grade equivalence is required. Include payment evidence for a bank transfer.
- For in-person submission, present identification. A representative must also provide written authorisation and their own identification.

Source: NACID official guidance • checked 14 October 2026

CERTIFICATION AND TRANSLATION

- Check NACID's guidance for the country that issued each educational document. Treaty provisions may affect the required certification.
- Where applicable, obtain an Apostille or complete the required diplomatic legalisation procedure.
- Translate the documents into Bulgarian. The translator's signature requires the relevant notarial or Bulgarian embassy certification.
- A certified true copy does not replace authentication of the original document. Check the country guidance before arranging either service.

Source: NACID official guidance • checked 14 October 2026

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

- Apply through the NACID e-services portal, or submit in person at its Administrative Service Centre, personally or through a representative.
- Online submission requires portal registration and a qualified electronic signature (QES).
- Attach clear scans and official registry access details or verification codes, where available, so authenticity can be checked.
- If electronic authenticity cannot be verified, present the originals on site. Keep the application registration number and monitor notifications.

Source: NACID official guidance • checked 14 October 2026

REVIEW, TIMING AND NEXT STEPS

- NACID checks the application. Respond to requests for corrections or additional documents within the stated deadline.
- The expert commission decides within one month after all required documents are submitted. The period is suspended while deficiencies are resolved.
- If recognition is granted, NACID issues a certificate valid in Bulgaria. Submitted original documents and translations are returned.
- Provide the certificate and any separate grade-equivalence note to the university, following its admission and enrolment instructions.

Source: NACID official guidance • checked 14 October 2026

FOREIGN DEGREES: FURTHER STUDY

- For a Master or doctoral programme, the competent authority for recognising a foreign higher education qualification is the rector of the chosen accredited Bulgarian university.
- Apply directly to that university for academic recognition and follow its document requirements and internal procedure.
- NACID provides information on foreign institutions and qualifications. Its recognition service for employment serves a different purpose.
- Official guidance: nacid.bg/en/
- Electronic services: portal.nacid.bg
- Enquiries: nacid@nacid.bg

Source: NACID official guidance • checked 14 October 2026

BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY RANKING SYSTEM



- Greater transparency in higher education;
- A basis for analysis and management decisions by higher education institutions, employers and the expert community;
- Options to create rankings of different types and scope for higher education institutions in each professional field.

BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY RANKING SYSTEM

- Launched in November 2010; the current edition contains updated information for 2026.
- Dozens of indicators compare 51 accredited institutions across 52 professional fields.
- Indicators cover teaching, research, the learning environment, social conditions, accessibility, prestige, regional relevance and graduate employment.
- Graduate occupations and career outcomes are reported. Monetary indicators are presented in euros, including recalculated historical data.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



GOOD LUCK TO ALL APPLICANTS!