

0.11% GENUINE AID/GNI

0.12% TOTAL AID/GNI

BULGARIA



OECD best practices and standards set the guiding principles for developing effective policy responses. As a candidate country for accession, Bulgaria is committed to implementing and promoting these highest standards in the SEE region in the interest of our citizens and businesses.”

Velislava Petrova, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria (17 May 2022)

MAIN CHANGES IN 2021

In 2021, preliminary data indicates that Bulgaria provided EUR 77.12 million in ODA, representing 0.12% of GNI. This was an increase of 0.5% in real terms in volume, but marked a slight decrease in share of GNI compared to 2020.

Bulgaria took an active part in the coordinated response of the EU and its Member States to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, Bulgaria continued its support to the Team Europe approach. As part of the EU response, Bulgaria provided EUR 20 000 to Namibia to deal with the severe epidemic situation in the country caused by the third wave of COVID-19. Bulgaria bilaterally donated vaccines to the Republic of North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bangladesh, and Bhutan.

In response to the current crisis in Ukraine and in addition to in-kind support, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria urgently redirected EUR 185 000 from its budget for humanitarian aid to Ukraine, which was provided through international organisations on the ground. In financial terms, Bulgaria’s support so far amounts approximately to EUR 1 million. The war is causing a massive influx of refugees to the country. Since the start of the war 532 470 Ukrainian refugees entered Bulgaria, 123 170 of whom were registered for temporary protection and 85 483 officially remained in the country. 39 143 were children. Bulgaria is open to Ukrainian refugees, and there was unprecedented humanitarian mobilisation in solidarity of the people of Ukraine.

Ukraine is a priority country for Bulgarian Aid with education as a longstanding thematic priority.



CASE STUDY BOX

Since 2018 Bulgaria has had successful cooperation with Japan on joint projects in the framework of the Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative. In 2021, Bulgarian Development Aid and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) co-financed the “Bulgaria and Japan Western Balkans specialised seminar on seismic risk challenges,” implemented by the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior. Disaster management is a common challenge in the Western Balkans region. Good practices in using disaster management policy frameworks and infrastructure development as preventive measures, risk education for citizens and school children, as well as private sector engagement were shared with the representatives of the six non-EU countries in the region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the Republic of North Macedonia, and Serbia. In addition to learning about the experiences of Bulgaria and Japan the participants were able to broaden their knowledge in the field by hearing from representatives of international organisations such as the World Bank, UNESCO, the European Space Agency, and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

Bulgaria stands ready to resume the implementation of development projects, once the situation allows.

TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS FOR 2022 AND BEYOND

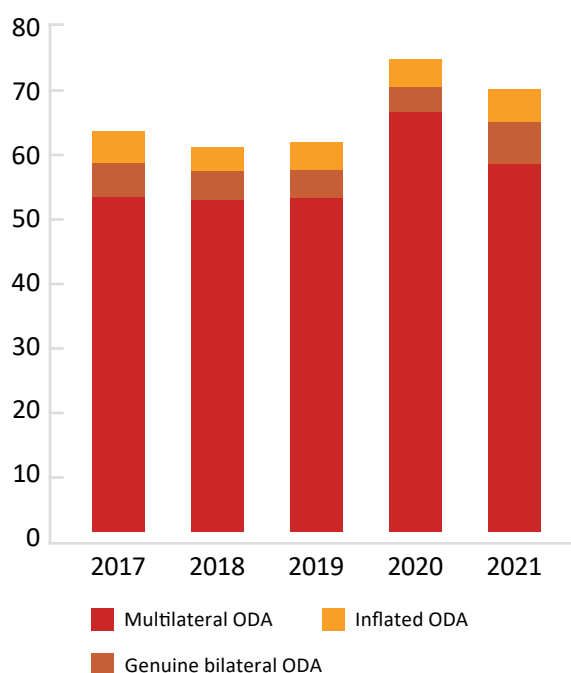
The Mid-term Programme for the period 2020-2024 produced a Programme for Global Education and Awareness Raising (GEAR) to fund global education projects at national level to raise awareness about development cooperation, sustainable development and SDGs, human rights, tolerance and peace, media literacy, and combating fake news. In January 2021 a round table and workshops were held to develop the priorities and goals of the new GEAR Programme.

Experts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Bulgarian CSOs and representatives of the Council of Europe's North-South Centre and the Global Education Network Europe (GENE) took part, but there were no follow-up actions to launch the programme. This is particularly concerning given the continued spread of a far right narrative in Bulgarian society and the lack of public support for Bulgaria's development cooperation efforts.

Moreover, there is still a barrier for Bulgarian CSOs to submit project proposals for Bulgarian Development Aid funding. According to the Law on the State Budget bilateral aid can be only transferred abroad, so all CSOs eligible to implement Bulgarian ODA projects are foreign and registered in the partner country, either locally or internationally. This can be considered as discriminatory towards Bulgarian CSOs. An even more serious concern is that the experience and good practices gained by the Bulgarian organisations in the transition years are not effectively implemented in work with the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership countries, which are currently in transition.

The OECD has launched official talks for Bulgaria's accession to the organisation with the adoption of a roadmap outlining the process. This step was taken at the annual Ministerial Council Meeting on 9-10 June 2022 in Paris. The OECD accession process will boost national reforms for good governance including those relating to Bulgarian Development Aid.

BULGARIA – GENUINE AND INFLATED ODA (€ million, constant 2020)



RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE BULGARIAN GOVERNMENT

- The government should further accelerate the process of developing a new law on development cooperation and include broad representation of stakeholders in the drafting process. The law should establish a new Agency for Development Cooperation to distribute bilateral ODA.
- The urgent introduction of specific regulations to improve the involvement of Bulgarian CSOs in the implementation phase of development cooperation programmes.
- Bulgarian bilateral aid should be increased, which will result in the increase of the total ODA as a percentage of GNI.
- A communication strategy and communication campaign that highlights the mutual benefits of development cooperation policies for both donors and beneficiaries should be formulated to include the effective implementation of the GEAR Programme as a tool for changing attitudes among young people.

ODA TO LDCS (€ million, constant 2020)

Year	ODA to LDCs	%GNI	% ODA
2017	11.4	0.0	17.9
2018	11.1	0.0	18.1
2019	13.0	0.0	21.0
2020	16.3	0.0	21.7

AID MODALITY (€ million, constant 2020)

Year	Bilateral (gross)	Grants	Loans	Loans (% of gross bilateral)
2017	10.1	10.1	0.0	0.0
2018	8.8	8.8	0.0	0.0
2019	8.3	8.3	0.0	0.0
2020	8.1	8.1	0.0	0.0

ODA TO CLIMATE FINANCE (€ million, constant 2020)

Bulgaria has not screened any of its ODA to climate finance.

ODA TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY (€ million, constant 2020)

	Bilateral allocable	Total screened	Not screened	None	Significant	Principal	Significant (% of screened)	Principal (% of screened)
2017	5.8	0.0	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2018	8.8	0.0	8.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2019	4.3	0.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2020	3.9	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

ODA TO SUPPORT CSOs (€ million, constant 2020)

	Non-CSO	CSO Earmarked	CSO Core funding	Total bilateral CSO support (% bilateral)	Total bilateral CSO support (% ODA)	Core bilateral CSO support (% bilateral)	Core bilateral CSO support (% ODA)
2017	10.12925	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018	8.753333	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019	8.345751	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020	8.081775	0	0	0	0	0	0