

Polity IV Country Report 2007: Bulgaria

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| <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Score:</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2006</td> <td style="width: 15%;">2007</td> <td style="width: 15%;">Change</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polity:</td> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democ:</td> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Autoc:</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Durable:</td> <td></td> <td>17</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tentative:</td> <td></td> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | Score: | 2006 | 2007 | Change | Polity: | 9 | 9 | 0 | Democ: | 9 | 9 | 0 | Autoc: | 0 | 0 | 0 | Durable: | | 17 | | Tentative: | | No | | <p style="text-align: center;">Authority Trends, 1946-2007: Bulgaria</p> |
| Score: | 2006 | 2007 | Change | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Polity: | 9 | 9 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Democ: | 9 | 9 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Autoc: | 0 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Durable: | | 17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tentative: | | No | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SCODE | BUL | CCODE | 355 | Date of Report | 1 November 2008 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Polity IV Component Variables | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| XRREG | XRCOMP | XROPEN | XCONST | PARREG | PARCOMP | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date of Most Recent Polity Transition (3 or more point change) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| End Date | | 29 March 1990 | | Begin Date | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 30 March 1990 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Polity Fragmentation: No | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Constitution | 1991 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Executive(s) | President Georgi Parvanov (BSP); initially directly elected November 2001; reelected 22 and 29 October 2006, 61.6% and 75.9% Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev (BSP) (since 16 August 2005); elected by Parliament on 27 July 2005 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Legislature | Unicameral: National Assembly (240 seats; proportionally elected; most recent elections, 25 June 2005) Coalition for Bulgaria (KzB): 83 [<i>coalition of parties dominated by BSP</i>] National Movement for Simeon II (NDST): 53 Movement for Rights and Freedoms (DPS): 33 Attack Coalition (Ataka): 21 [<i>coalition of parties headed by Attack National Union</i>] United Democratic Forces (ODS): 20 [<i>coalition of center-right parties dominated by UDF</i>] Democrats for a Strong Bulgaria (DSB): 17 Bulgarian People's Union (BNS): 13 [<i>coalition of UFD, IMRO, and BANU</i>] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Judiciary | Supreme Court of Cassation; Constitutional Court | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Narrative Description:¹

Executive Recruitment: Competitive Elections (8)

Bulgaria is a mixed presidential, parliamentary system. After decades of single-party communist rule, Bulgaria restored open multi-party elections in 1990. Up until the mid-1990s, the BSP, an ex-communist party fully determined to preserve socialism in Bulgaria, dominated the positions of executive power. However, anti-government protests in 1996 forced the ruling BSP to hold early elections. In April 1997 the UDF, running on a platform of “good and efficient government,” defeated the BSP and formed a new government. In 2001, however, the UDF was tossed out of office as the NDST, which consisted of supporters of former-King Simeon II, won the legislative elections and named the former-King to the position of prime minister. In the July 2005 legislative elections, in which twenty-two parties participated, the socialist BSP won a slim victory over the ruling NDST. However, the BSP was forced to enter into a ruling coalition with the NDST. The leader of the BSP, Sergi Stanishev, became prime minister in August 2005. In addition to laying claim to the office of the prime minister, the BSP also gained control the office of the presidency. The Socialist Party candidate, Georgi Parvanov, won a runoff election with the incumbent president, Petar Stojanov, in 2001. Parvanov won a second term in office with a landslide victory in October 2006.

Executive Constraints: Executive Parity or Subordination (7)

The Constitution defines that Bulgaria has a mixed parliamentary system of government with independent and equal executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The president principally serves as commander in chief of the armed forces, seals international treaties, and appoints the prime minister. The president can serve only two terms and may be impeached by a vote of the National Assembly. Cabinet appointments require legislature approval, and the legislature may also pass a no-confidence vote in the Council of Ministers (chief executive and administrative organ) and the prime minister. Therefore, the government is dependent on the legislature’s continued support to remain in office, and the prime minister’s position is taken by the parliament majority leader. The judiciary is independent but suffers from corruption and continues to struggle with structural and staffing problems.

Political Participation: Political Liberalization: Limited and/or Decreasing Overt Coercion (9)

Political competition in post-communist Bulgaria is waged among relatively stable and inclusive mass-based blocs: Democrats (ODS), Socialists (former Communist Party of Bulgaria and its allied groups, such as the Agrarians, United Labor and others), and ethnic minority parties (notably Turkish and Roma minorities). Former King Simeon II (dethroned in his infancy in 1946) returned to Bulgaria and set up his own electoral bloc (NDST) which came out as the winner in the elections in June 2001. However, the Socialist party returned to power in a coalition government with the NDST in 2005. This coalition was formed after weeks of post-election deadlock and increasing pressure from the European Union. Bulgaria was not among the Eastern European countries first invited to join the EU in 2004, however, it signed the EU accession treaty in April 2005 and formally joined the political organization in January 2007.

Whereas political competition in general is based on open and fair democratic procedures, without overt coercion, there have been occasional incidents of violence against journalists. There are also complaints that constitutional restrictions on political parties formed on ethnic, racial, or religious lines limit participation for some minority groups. In the 2005 elections, the radical nationalist group called Ataka won 8% of the national vote and took 21 seats in the national assembly. This party is opposed to efforts to integrate Bulgaria’s Turkish and Roma minorities into the political system. Most of the institutional strength of Ataka comes from former members of the BSP and several “patriotic alliances” run by communist-era military and intelligence officers. Ataka wants to ban the ethnic-Turk MRF as an “anticonstitutional ethnic organ” and to solve the problem of “Roma criminality” by the means of massive police power and the use of local vigilantes. Defined by a reflexive loathing of capitalism, Ataka wants to “Bulgarianize” the public sphere and reassert state ownership of industry.

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