

# Bulgaria

Bulgaria is a Member State of the Council of Europe (COE) and of the United Nations (UN), and has human rights obligations at the regional and universal levels.

## Regional: European System



As a Member of the COE, Bulgaria has ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and is subject to the jurisdiction of the [European Court of Human Rights](#). Bulgaria has ratified the Revised European Social Charter, and has authorized the [European Committee of Social Rights](#) to decide collective complaints against it. Its human rights policies and practices are also monitored by the [COE Commissioner for Human Rights](#), who identifies gaps in human rights protection, conducts country visits, engages in dialogue with States, and prepares thematic reports and advice.

Individuals and groups have submitted complaints of human rights violations committed by Bulgaria to the European Court of Human Rights. For example, the Court held that Bulgaria violated the right to life when military police killed two Roma individuals who fled their army service conscription, and when authorities failed to effectively investigate their deaths. See ECtHR, [Nachova and Others v. Bulgaria](#), no. 43577/98 and 43579/98, ECHR 2005, Judgment of 6 July 2005. The Court may also grant [interim measures](#) to protect people in urgent situations of risk in Bulgaria.

As a State party to the Revised European Social Charter, Bulgaria must submit regular reports to the European Committee of Social Rights on its implementation of the Charter's provisions. The Committee has also decided collective complaints against Bulgaria. For example, the Committee held that Bulgarian housing policies discriminated against the Roma community and constituted a violation of the rights of the family to social, legal, and economic protection. See ECSR, [European Roma Rights Centre \(ERRC\) v. Bulgaria](#), Complaint No. 48/2008, Merits, 18 February 2009.

Bulgaria is a [party](#) to the following **regional human rights treaties**:

- European Convention on Human Rights and several of its [protocols](#)
- Revised European Social Charter
- COE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
- European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

## United Nations System

As a UN Member State, Bulgaria is subject to the oversight of various [UN human rights bodies](#), including the [Human Rights Council](#) and its [Universal Periodic Review](#) and thematic [special procedures](#). As a party to specific universal human rights treaties, Bulgaria's policies and practices are monitored by UN [treaty bodies](#). It has accepted the complaints procedure of four treaty bodies.

Bulgaria has ratified the following **UN human rights treaties**:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Bulgaria has also ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aimed at abolishing the death penalty, and optional protocols to the CRC addressing children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Bulgaria has a duty to submit **State reports** to the UN treaty body associated with each UN human rights treaty Bulgaria has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis and describe the steps taken to implement the treaty provisions.

Bulgaria has also ratified [optional protocols](#) and made appropriate declarations allowing individuals to submit **complaints** against the State alleging violations of the ICCPR, CEDAW, CAT, and CERD. Additionally, certain UN treaties contain **inquiry procedures**, which allow the UN treaty body to consider allegations of grave or systematic human rights violations. Bulgaria has accepted the inquiry procedures of the CAT and CEDAW.

In March 2001, Bulgaria extended a **standing invitation** to UN special procedures, which means that any such mandate holders are welcome to conduct visits in Bulgaria. For example, the Independent Expert on minority issues went on a mission to Bulgaria in 2011 and published a visit [report](#) in 2012.

For more information on Bulgaria's engagement with [UN human rights bodies](#), visit <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/ENACARegion/Pages/BGIndex.aspx>.

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