

COST OF LIVING IN BULGARIA

Real numbers — keep for reference

Bulgaria's cost of living is roughly 30% lower than the EU average. Bulgaria officially joined the eurozone on 1 January 2026, retiring the lev at a fixed rate of 1 EUR = 1.95583 leva, and prices across the country have been resettling since. Here are real, current numbers for expats in Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna, Burgas, and the coast.

1 Rent — the biggest variable

Sofia commands a real premium over the rest of the country, but even there, rents remain far below Western European capitals.

PROPERTY TYPE	SOFIA CENTRE	PLOVDIV	VARNA	BURGAS	SUNNY BEACH
Studio	€420–€550	€280–€380	€320–€430	€330–€420	€300–€400
1-bed apartment	€600–€700	€320–€450	€380–€520	€400–€460	€350–€440
2-bed apartment	€750–€1,150	€450–€650	€500–€750	€520–€680	€480–€620

2 Food, groceries & eating out

Sofia and Plovdiv's restaurant scenes far exceed what the prices suggest.

€8–€18

Restaurant meal

€1.50–€2.50

Coffee at a café

€35–€55

Weekly groceries (1 person)

3 Transport & fuel

Among the cheapest in the EU, around 10–15% below the bloc's average.

€0.80

Single bus/metro ticket

€25.50

Monthly transport pass

€1.45–€1.55

Petrol, per litre

€1.55–€1.65

Diesel, per litre

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Utilities and internet

Bulgaria has some of the fastest and cheapest internet in Europe — a genuine advantage for remote workers and digital businesses.

SERVICE	MONTHLY COST
Electricity (1–2 bed apartment)	€40–€95
Central heating (winter months)	€60–€160
Water	€8–€16
High-speed fibre internet (1 Gbps)	€10–€18
Mobile phone plan (data + calls)	€8–€20

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Sample monthly budgets

A realistic range covering essentials only, up through a genuinely comfortable lifestyle.

PROFILE	ESSENTIALS	COMFORTABLE
Single person, Sofia	€900–€1,200	€1,300–€1,800
Single person, Plovdiv	€700–€900	€1,000–€1,400
Couple, Sofia	€1,400–€1,800	€2,000–€2,800
Family of 4, regional city	€1,800–€2,400	€2,600–€3,600

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Bulgaria vs. Western Europe

A quick side-by-side so the savings are concrete, not just a percentage.

ITEM	SOFIA	BERLIN	LONDON
1-bed rent (centre)	€600	€1,400	€2,200
Restaurant meal	€12	€16	€22
Monthly transport pass	€25.50	€86	£180

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The bottom line

Bulgaria offers a quality of life that genuinely competes with Western Europe — arguably surpasses it in climate, food quality, and access to nature — at 30–50% of the price. For entrepreneurs running lean, remote-first businesses, or families seeking EU residency without a six-figure annual budget, it is an exceptionally rational choice.