



“Towards the Open City” Openness – A Driver for Successful Cities

SOFIA MUNICIPALITY

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OPENCities project is based on a concept developed by the British Council in collaboration with a network of European Cities.



Participation of Sofia Municipality in the URBACT II Programme:

- Co Net;
- Open Cities:
 - LEAD Partner – Belfast, North Ireland, GB
 - Partners:
 - Dublin, Ireland
 - Vienna, Austria
 - Madrid, Spain
 - Sofia, Bulgaria

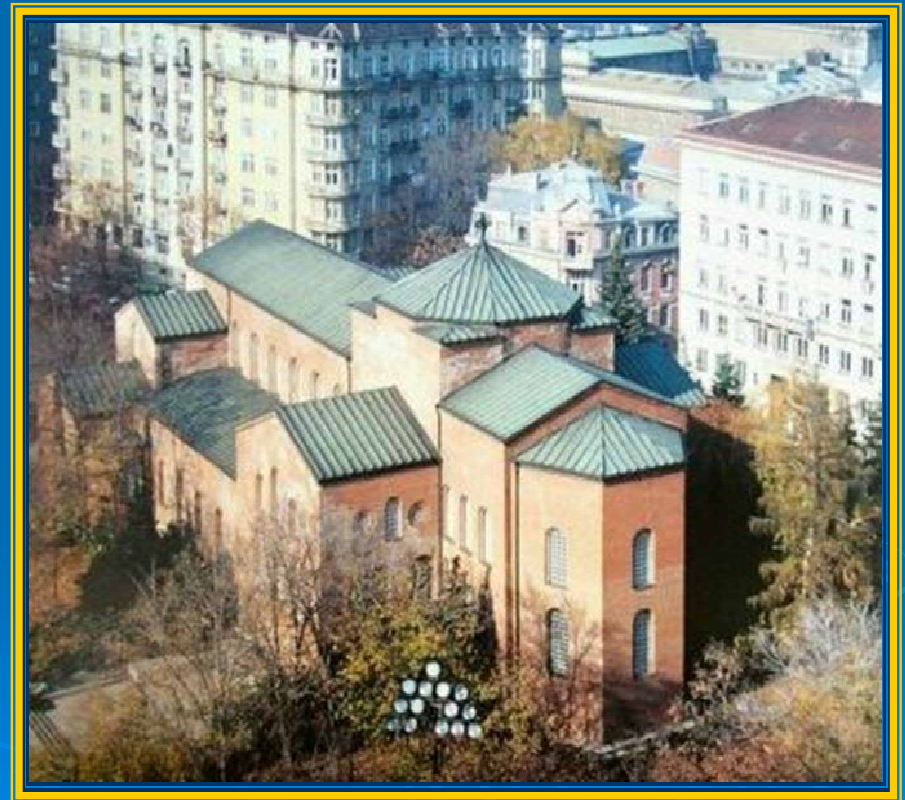


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Sofia Municipality

- ✓ Capital of Bulgaria for the last 120 years, nowadays it has more than 1,3 million citizens;
- ✓ One of the oldest European Cities, founded 7 thousand years ago;
- ✓ City with fast growing economy, industry, services and real estate sector;
- ✓ Dominant position in Bulgaria's political, economic and cultural life.



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- Geographical Centre of South East Europe and Entry point to the Middle East;
- Cross point of Three Pan-European Transport Corridors:



- ✓ Corridor № 4 - connecting Central Europe and the Mediterranean Sea;
- ✓ Corridor № 8 – connecting the Adriatic and the Black Sea;
- ✓ Corridor № 10 – connecting Western Europe with Turkey and the Middle East.

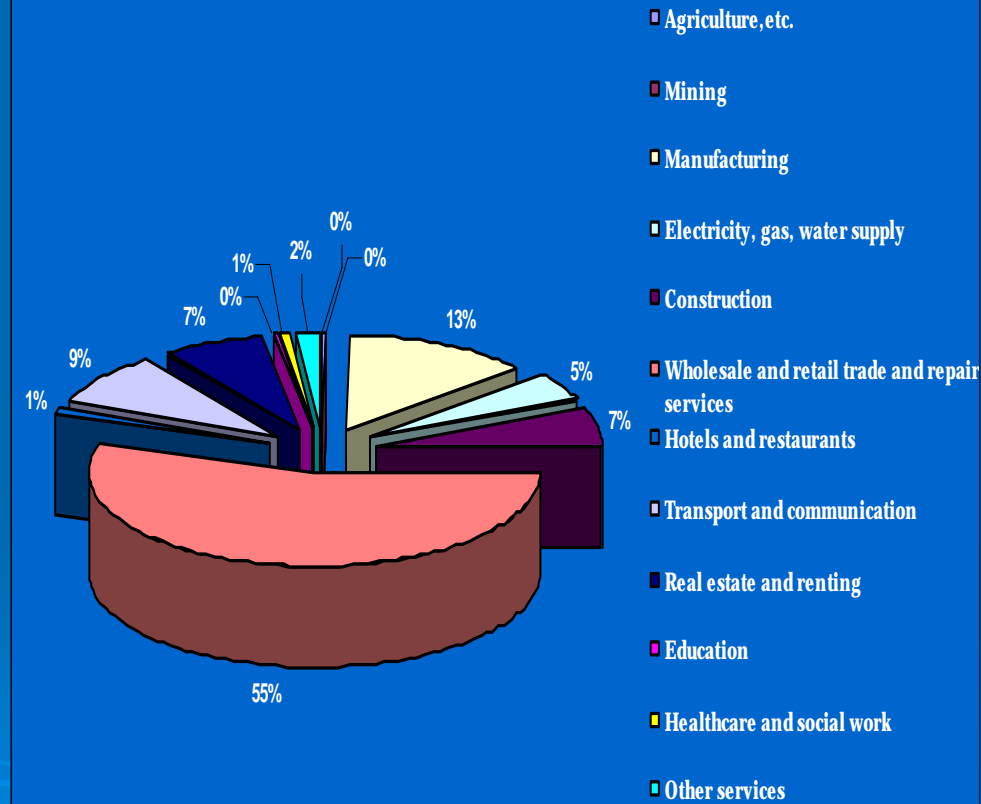


Sofia City

- ✓ The GDP of Sofia represents 33,4 % of the national GDP/2007/;
- ✓ GDP per capita for 2007 is EUR **7778** /69% of the EU average/;
- ✓ The largest sector of the municipal economy is the service sector with 74 %;
- ✓ There are 41 710 small and medium-sized enterprises which produce 71% of all revenues.



Structure of the revenues of enterprises, 2006



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Sofia City

- ✓ Sofia concentrates 68.7 % of all direct foreign investments in Bulgaria for the last 15 years;
- ✓ It has active real estate market with office space rental fees lowest among the CEEC

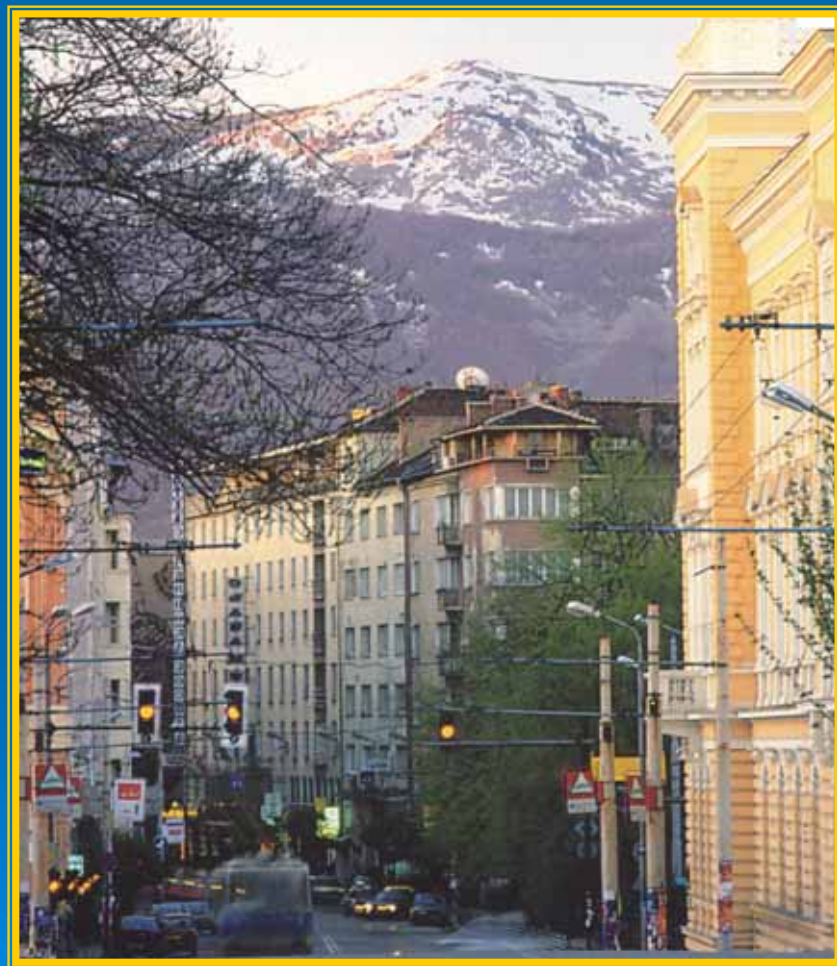


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Sofia City

- ✓ The unemployment rate is under 1,3 % - the lowest in Bulgaria;
- ✓ 65.2 % of the population is of working age;
- ✓ 20 % of the employed in Bulgaria work in Sofia / 40-50 000 daily commuters/;



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- ✓ Sofia is the key business centre in Bulgaria and the most attractive place for foreign residents to live and work.
- ✓ The permanent resident foreigners on the territory of the country are 55 653 as of 31.12.2006 (NSI).
- ✓ The number of citizens of EC-25 is 6 245, from other European countries - 32 743, from Asia - 8 162, from Africa - 591, from America - 732, etc.
- ✓ About 2/3 (30-40,000) of the foreigners with permanent residence stay and live in Sofia.



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Challenges:

- ✓ Sofia has to cope with the process of globalization by developing municipal migration policy and specific programmes for migrants;
- ✓ Identification of the needs of the different migrant groups.



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Future Outlook:

- ✓ Sofia Local Support Group established to prepare Local Action Plan;
- ✓ Municipal migration policy and specific programmes developed;
- ✓ Pilot project implemented under Fast track option.



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Thank you for the attention!

