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DESTINATIONS 

# BULGARIA

## OUTSOURCING DESTINATION GUIDE

**ITO & BPO MARKET  
EXAMPLES  
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Independent  
information  
guide by  
German  
Outsourcing  
Association

TECHNOLOGY  
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BULGARIA  
ITO & BPO  
SERVICES

# Outsourcing Destination Guide Bulgaria

We present with the Outsourcing Guide Bulgaria the capabilities and actors of the Bulgarian ITO and BPO Industry.

We show case unique solutions invented by Bulgarian service industry experts in the form of case studies and project reports.

As a result we help decision makers better understand the advantages and conditions in working with Bulgarian ITO and BPO service providers.

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Independent information guide by German Outsourcing Association in co-operation with BOA - Bulgarian Outsourcing Association and BASSCOM - Bulgarian Association of Software Companies.



## Orlov Most junction, Sofia





# THE BULGARIAN ITO & BPO INDUSTRY

An Overview

# Bulgaria – Southeast Europe's Outsourcing Bandwagon

A market overview by Bulgarian Outsourcing Association

In 2014 Bulgaria's GDP growth is expected to reach 1.7% in real terms remaining higher than the last two years combined. The established trends for increasing unemployment rates and diminishing foreign direct investments are changing positively. FDI is expected to remain a key component of funding future growth in the medium and long term with two major acquisitions in the IT sector. The fiscal position has stayed overall strong, despite an increase in the budget deficit in 2013 - 14.

After the application of new methodology by the World Bank Bulgaria ranks 38th out of 189 economies in the Doing Business 2015 report. Although country's position in the ranking deteriorates from place 36 in 2014 to the current level of 38, taking into account that the 2014 rankings have been adjusted and

reflect data correction its 2015 Doing Business score is better than in the Czech Republic (44), Romania (48), Hungary (54), and Greece (61).

## Speaking for Bulgaria as outsourcing destination

Bulgaria is a reputable and highly attractive destination to outsource IT, business process and knowledge process projects. According to A.T. Kearney's 2014 report it is the most preferred place four outsourcing in Europe and is the only European country that entered the top 10 destinations for outsourcing in the world. Bulgaria ranked ninth on the Global Services Location Index of international consultancy's index that covers 51 countries worldwide. It is based on 25 metrics in three

major categories - financial attractiveness, people skills and availability, and business environment. The fact of moving up eight places compared to 2011 when the consultancy last conducted the survey could provide further motivation to companies' decisions about where to locate offshore operations.

Bulgaria's advanced IT centers serve local and foreign companies active in the development of mostly traditional software, such as CSC and SAP.

A recent research by the media analytics company of Perceptica, shows that the reputation of Bulgaria as a place of doing business has been constantly growing in the past decade, though from a low start. "Rising star", "Climbing", "Growth" and "Multiple Benefits" "Boosting development" are the new words and phrases that describe Bulgaria's attractiveness, especially as an outsourcing des-

mination. It is increasingly attractive both as a place to establish new near-shore centers, and as a place to outsource Information Technology, Business Processes and Knowledge Processes to a growing number of local and multinational vendors.

Bulgaria ranks among the Top 10 countries with fastest Internet speed worldwide, holding 8th position, Bulgaria ranks third worldwide by the number of certified IT professionals and is first in Europe by IT-certified specialists per capita.

## **Bulgaria's four main pillars as an outsourcing location are:**

**Geographical proximity** - Bulgaria's strategic location in Europe is very important because it is close to big European countries and time zone issues are avoided as well.

**Human resources** – Availability of talent pool speaking all major European languages, highly skilled professionals

**Labour costs** – Bulgarians' salaries are the lowest in the European Union.

**Favourable macroeconomic and political environment.**

Positive news for Bulgaria is the prospect to attract some of the Western European companies that have been outsourcing to

North Africa, but now seek for markets that involve less risk. The reason for the recent growth of the Bulgarian outsourcing sector is that companies in Western Europe are forced to cut operating expenses in order to maintain and expand their business.

Sofia is the only capital in CEE EU countries which is still not overheating according to McKinsey report. This report shows also that Bulgaria has the resources and the attractiveness to replicate the growth of Poland. The city is reported to have the highest percentage of graduates holding technical degrees in IT and engineering across the whole CEE region.

## People

One of Bulgaria's major strengths in the global outsourcing market is the well-developed education system in the areas of electronics, engineering and computer sciences. In 2011 there were more than 64,000 graduates from 53 universities and colleges, of which more than 30,000 graduates potentially suitable for employment within the BPO industry. Among the enrolled 280,000 students in Bulgarian universities, more than 115,000 studied in the fields of IT, Mathematics, Economics and Administration. At any given time, there are more than 10,000 Bulgarian students

majoring in computer science, electrical engineering, mathematics, physics, and biotechnology. Despite the high proportion of students graduating in these majors, their total number still fails to match the needs of the outsourcing sector in Bulgaria.

Language training is at a high level - 98% of high school students study a foreign language and 73% have German, French, Spanish or Russian as their second language. The cost-effective labour force is another advantage of Bulgaria over its major competitors in the region. See table at page 34 - Annual average wage in Bulgaria in 2011. Bulgaria ranks first in Europe in IT-certified specialists per capita and third worldwide in the number of certified IT professionals

## How much to pay?

The government supports investment projects that create significant number of jobs, regardless of the value of the investment. This is particularly beneficial for activities that form the outsourcing sector in the country – software development, technical testing and analyses, engineering, finance and accounting, office support activities and call centres.

Bulgaria offers the lowest corporate tax in EU – a flat 10% rate.

Bulgaria's most expensive office location Sofia occupied the 61st position out of 63 locations in the Cushman&Wakefield's Office Space across the World 2013 analysis. According to the same research, Sofia ranked 8th among the cities with fastest rental growth in Europe and the Middle East with 4.0% in 2012. High-quality and modern office space is crucial to the long-term existence of outsourcing centres. This facilitates optimising operational costs and retaining employees in the companies.

As of May 2013, the broadband connections testing company Ookla ranked Bulgaria 15th out of 185 countries in terms of download speed, 14th in terms of upload speed and ninth by Quality Index.

A recent study made by the IT company Panda Network in re-

vealed that Bulgaria has the third fastest internet connections in the world after South Korea and Romania. According to a research conducted by Cisco Systems and Oxford University in 2010, Bulgaria ranked fifth in the world and third in Europe in terms of quality of broadband internet connections.

The internet access in Bulgaria continues to improve and in the end of 2014 the penetration rate among households stood at 56.9%. This is still one of the lowest value in the EU, but is relatively quick improving compared to the last five years period.

## Outsourcing Sector

Bulgaria's outsourcing sector is concentrated in several big cities and university centres – the capital Sofia, Plovdiv, Burgas, Ruse,

Blagoevgrad, Varna and Veliko Tarnovo. Currently about 95% of the industry is focused in Sofia. However, in the last two years the clear trend for outsourcing activities to other cities (especially Plovdiv) will continue, one of the reasons being the readiness of smaller universities to collaborate with the business.

Employment in the outsourcing industry has been growing rapidly over the past ten years and the trend is expected to remain strong in the next five years. This was driven by both intrinsic market growth and new companies entering the vendor market as foreign investors mainly from the USA, Western Europe and, most recently - Israel.

The number of employed in the sector in 2012 amounted to more than 17,000, a 13% year-on-year increase and almost 40% growth

### Number of employees in the outsourcing industry 2010-2013 (EoY = End of Year)



compared to 2010. In 2013 the outsourcing industry topped 20 000 employees with expected rise for 2014 expected to reach almost 20% annual growth and estimated 50 000 employed in the industry by 2018 according to BOA. Cumulative average growth rate of FTE employment in BPO sector was over 24% in 2011 and 16% in 2012.

The above figure shows the number of employees at end of year (EoY) and the full-time equivalent for the last 3 years among the researched companies.

This cumulative average growth rate (CAGR) of the number of employees in the sector for the past years is 19.3% (18.7 for FTEs). If the trend continues, within the next 5 years (by 2018) Bulgaria would employ a workforce of almost 50 000 people (49) or around 43 000 FTEs.

The total operating revenue of the leading Bulgarian outsourcing companies stood at EUR 365 mln in 2010, EUR 448.7 mln in 2011 and EUR 498.9 mln in 2012 and 543 mln EUR for 2013.

Bulgaria is the most preferred place for outsourcing in Europe as it is the only European country that entered the top 10 destinations for outsourcing in the world according to latest research by A.T. Kearney. Bulgaria ranked ninth on the 2014 Global Services Location Index of international consultancy A.T. Kearney, which seeks to bring rigour to companies' decisions about where to locate offshore operation, moving up eight places compared to 2011 when the consultancy last conducted the survey.

Bulgaria's advanced IT centers serve local and foreign companies active in the development of mostly traditional software, such as CSC and SAP, according to A.T. Kearney. Bulgaria has established itself in high-end, small-scale projects, customer contact centres and information tech-

Company	Nr. of Employees
60K	600
(Adecco) Ajilon	600
All Data Processing	400
AIG	120
Atos Bulgaria	100
Bulpros Consulting	400
C3i Europe	200
TELUS International Europe (CallPoint)	1200
Coca Cola ( HBC and Enterprise)	990
CSC	660
CSMS	300
Euroccor (IMRO)	450
EXL (OPI)	125
First Online solutions	280
Hewlett-Packard GDC Bulgaria	4 100
IBM Global Delivery Center	530
Ingram Micro	150
(Keagan solutions) Plusserver	50
Logicall	150
Natek	400
OnProcess Technology	25
Playtech	250
Processflows	160
Proxiad Bulgaria	180
OB10	250
SITEL	550
Skrill	400
(TeleTech) Sofica Group	750
(Convergys) Stream Global Services	300
Sutherland Global Services	300
TravelStore Maker	60
TaxBack.com	350

Bulgarian ICT and BPO companies, Source: BOA

nology outsourcing. The best developed areas are CAD/CAM/CAE systems, custom software, databases, service and support of computer equipment, telecommunication services and system integration.

The three leading countries that outsource their activities to Bulgaria are the UK, the USA and Germany. Outsourcing is done most often by companies in the financial sector, telecommunications, software development, trade and wholesale. Companies from France, Macedonia, Russia, Israel, Poland, Spain and Sweden also collaborate with Bulgarian outsourcing companies. According to various estimations the financial and the telecommunications sector each generate nearly 20% of the annual revenue of the industry. Less significant clients of Bulgarian outsourcing companies are the tourist sector and the manufacturing.

A market survey, conducted among more than 200 outsourcing companies, by Seenews, a real-time news agency and business intelligence provider estimated the share of the three basic segments in the Bulgarian outsourcing industry as follows:

- 55% Business Process Outsourcing**
- 25% IT Outsourcing**
- 10% Knowledge Process Outsourcing**

The majority of the companies in the industry define their activity as a combination of two or even all three segments.

The Bulgarian Outsourcing Association is a branch organisation which aims to consolidate the interests of companies that offer outsourcing services, boost the competitiveness of the environment and create additional conditions to bolster foreign investments in the sector. It has 20 members of which 17 companies from all three subsectors – ITO, BPO and KPO and three universities. One of the characteristics of the sector in Bulgaria is that the key players act as partners rather than competitors. Partnering on the international level is an opportunity for the CEE countries to compete for large-scale projects with the global leaders India and China.

## Business Process Outsourcing

In 2012 BPO was the fastest growing segment in Bulgaria and in Europe. The world leaders in the BPO sector are India and China. Their major European competitor is Poland, followed by Bulgaria and Ukraine.

According to InvestBulgaria Agency, the expected biggest source industries for new con-

tracts are IT, Telecommunications, Transport and Tourism. The expected largest source countries for new investments are Germany, USA, the UK, Austria and the Netherlands. The outsourcing activities with highest demand will be call centre operations, customer support and market research.

## IT Outsourcing

Bulgarian outsourcing companies have specialised in the development of complex informational systems in areas like CAD/CAM, GIS, ERP, CRM, firmware, E-business and B2B solutions.

An essential advantage of Bulgarian market regarding software development is the availability of educated and qualified programme experts – Bulgaria is ranked 10th in the world by number of available certified IT specialists.

In 2011 the Central and Eastern European Outsourcing Association estimated the IT outsourcing market volume in Bulgaria at USD 322 mln. The number of IT outsourcing companies was 470 with more than 4,700 employees. The dynamic development of cloud computing technologies will facilitate the growth in IT outsourcing. The software segment will continue to enjoy an increase in exports and outsourcing contracts with foreign companies.

## Knowledge Process Outsourcing

KPO is still the least developed segment of the outsourcing sector in Bulgaria with estimated share of 10% of the local market. Expected growth within this segment is anticipated since it provides much larger rates of profit margin.

The Bulgarian-based vendors are capable of accepting and delivering on more challenging tasks, requiring more non-routine and knowledge-intensive input. It could be rightfully named the best European destination for IT, Business and Knowledge Process Management services as opposed to (or in addition to) outsourcing of lower-end outsourcing services.

According to Bulgarian Ministry of Economy Bulgaria is becoming more and more a recognized outsourcing destination not only for supporting business processes, but also for innovative research and development activities.

## Profitability

The total turnover of the BPO sector was EUR 114.9 mln in 2012, up from EUR 81.0 mln in 2010. The total turnover of the ITO sector was EUR 384 mln in 2012, up from EUR 284 mln in 2010. While

the overall profits in the BPO segment climbed by 4.36% in 2011 and by 7.18% in 2012 to reach EUR 3.7 mln, they are about ten times less than the profit figures achieved by the ITO sector. In terms of profitability per FTE, the situation is similar to the ITO sector, where the dropped plunged by 20% and 8% in 2011 and 2012 respectively.

The average profit per person in the customer services sector is about 35% of the one witnessed in the ITO sphere. In terms of segmentation, the ITO grew by 24% and 9% respectively, while BPO kept an almost flat rate of increase with 19% year-on-year for both 2011 and 2012.

## What to expect in the future?

In the short run Bulgaria will remain one of the most attractive outsourcing destinations in Central and Eastern Europe. In the long run the country has to struggle to defend its comparative advantage, given the deteriorating demographic structure and the lack of support from the state institutions for the outsourcing industry. Other challenges in front of the industry are the limited market size, which corresponds to insignificant domestic demand, and the need of further development of manage-

ment practice in most Bulgarian companies.

Bulgaria is still among the European countries with lowest labour costs – one of the three most important factors for choice of outsourcing destination. However, this advantage will diminish in the long run, which necessitates concentrating on improvement in the other two factors – the skills of the workforce and the business climate.

According to the Bulgarian Outsourcing Association, if the growth rate of around 20% per year persists, the Bulgarian outsourcing industry is expected to employ 30,000 people by 2015 and more than 45,000 by 2018. Over the next five years Bulgaria's outsourcing industry will see double-digit growth and the country will remain within the 10 most attractive destinations for outsourcing in the world.

In the years to come the emphasis in Bulgarian outsourcing industry will fall on development of high-value-added IT outsourcing services and to smaller extent on business process outsourcing, especially call centres.

Bulgarian market is still far from mature and offers good growth potential as new locations in Bulgaria are emerging to offer ground for expansion.

Bulgaria is well-suited to attract language-intensive, IT-intensive, high value-added services and projects requiring knowledge-intensive input and thus maintain its position as a preferred outsourcing destination and develop knowledge process outsourcing and R&D centers.

A new trend in Bulgaria is the development of Legal process outsourcing (LPO) - the act of consigning legal services to low-wage overseas companies. The most serious obstacle discussed is the difference in national civil

legal systems. However this is not expected to influence most of the LPO work, as the CEE region has already been labeled as the forerunner in multilingual patent outsourcing.

**This article was contributed by the Bulgarian Outsourcing Association (BOA).**

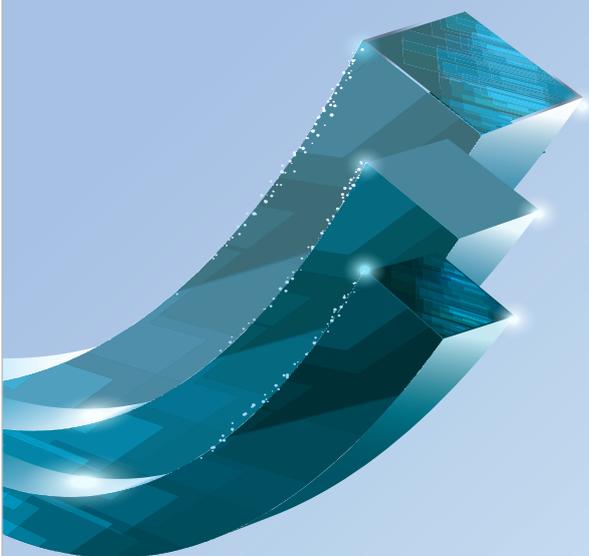
The German Outsourcing Association (GAO) and BOA have signed a co-operation agreement to support market development and business co-operations between the German and

the Bulgarian ICT industry. More information about this co-operation are available via the websites of BOA ([outsourcinginbg.com](http://outsourcinginbg.com)) and GAO ([www.outsourcing-verband.org](http://www.outsourcing-verband.org)).

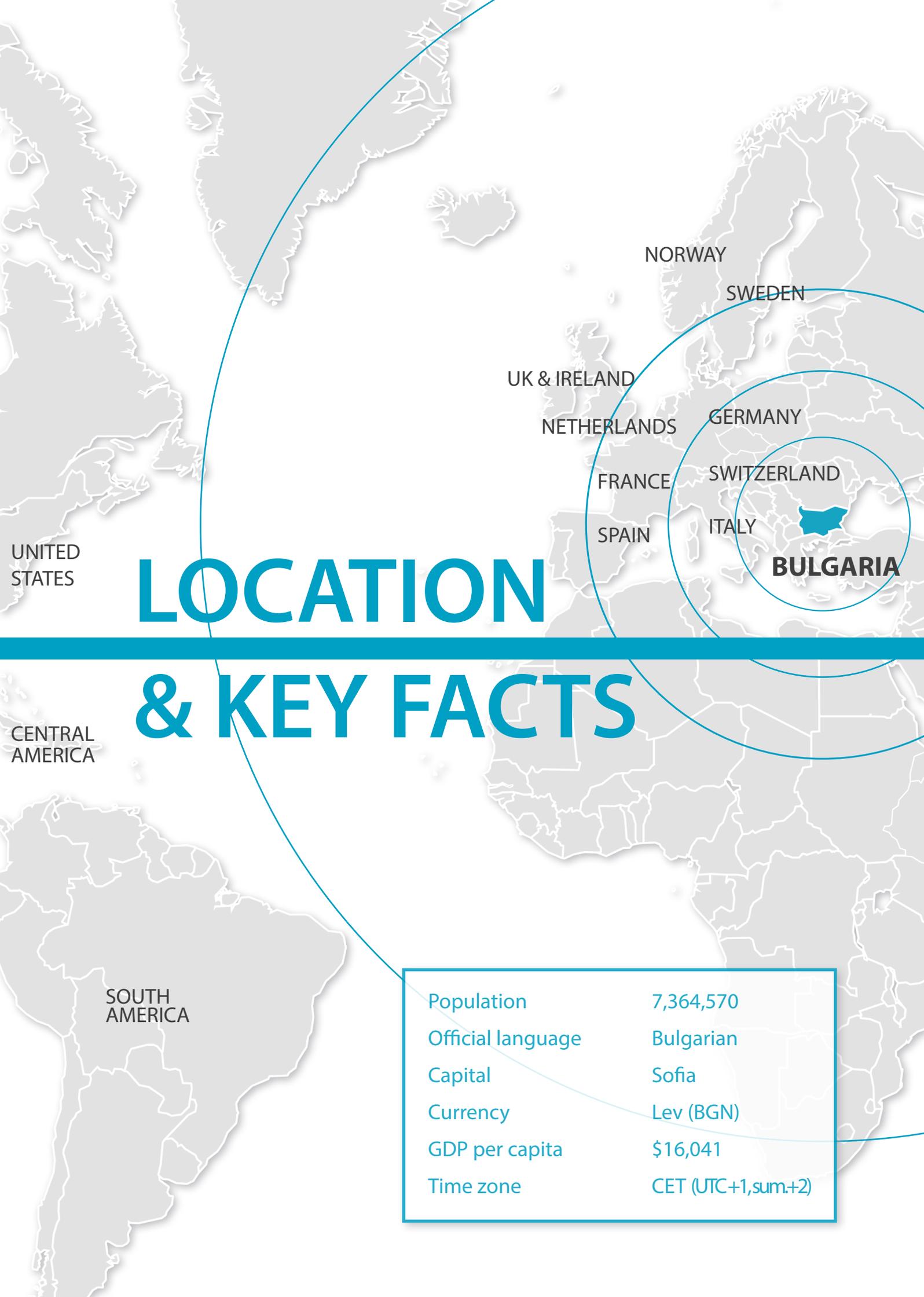
### Bulgarian ITO/BPO Industry Association

**BULGARIAN ASSOCIATION  
OUTSOURCING**

[www.outsourcinginbg.com](http://www.outsourcinginbg.com)



- Multilingual, highly skilled and qualified workforce
- Proximity to Europe - both physical & cultural; member of EU since 2007
- Traditions in ITO, BPO and KPO sectors
- Successful presence of leading multinationals
- Macroeconomic stability
- Attractive cost of doing business



# LOCATION & KEY FACTS

Population	7,364,570
Official language	Bulgarian
Capital	Sofia
Currency	Lev (BGN)
GDP per capita	\$16,041
Time zone	CET (UTC+1,sum.+2)



# 30+ ways to say we care



**Industries:** Travel & Leisure, Retail & E-commerce, IT & Telecom, Financial services, Pharma & Healthcare services and Games

**Services:** Multilingual, Multichannel Customer Care Solutions, IT Outsourcing, Risk Management, Transformation Solutions, Social Media Solutions

We are a leading European provider of multilingual contact center and business process outsourcing solutions and a proud member of the TELUS International family.

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# George Brashnarov, Board member and former Chairman of BASSCOM



*BASSCOM is the Association of Software Companies in Bulgaria, founded in 2001 by 15 companies, which called themselves “outsourcing” companies, as it was the time when the level of our specialists and the internal processes organization were in their early stage of development.*

*13 years later, we see a very different reality where the main business of the Bulgarian software companies is not the low-skilled “coding”, but participation in all the phases of today’s software production - analysis, design, architecture, implementation, quality control, maintenance and development. In addition to the high level of professional software engineers, companies continue to develop and invest in advanced process-oriented workflow - from classical CMMI to the trendy AGILE practices.*

*This development allowed the software business to outstand the area of “outsourcing” and reach the so-*

called "Partnership" model for all the serious market players. Some of them, like SAP, Software AG, VMWare, CSC, Nemetschek, Johnson Controls, Axway etc., acquired local companies and/ or opened their own R&D Labs, while others preferred to work through partnerships. Recent trends show an increasing interest of the Bulgarian software companies to invest in their own innovative products and services and approaching world markets.

It means that the Bulgarian companies appreciate the early years of their development as software

outsourcing entities, but as we know - the success comes and stands in those who continue their development, so we're building on our previous experience to achieve new goals.

This is how the image of Bulgaria has transformed from low-cost destination into stable and quality partner. The excellent infrastructure, competitive costs for starting and maintaining a business (taxes, rent, internet connectivity, legal and accounting services) are the other components of our competitive position.

But the most important part is the availability of highly qualified and innovative thinking specialists - as in today's world the quality and the level of organization increasingly surpasses the quantity.

As for the specific area of software development - a huge competitive advantage is the high level of the Bulgarian engineers and their ability to deal with vague or frequently changing requirements, to be flexible, innovative and to take into consideration the specifics of each business.

### Bulgarian IT-Industry Report *(Click to Download)*



## Bulgarian IT Industry Barometer

Annual report on the state of the Bulgarian software sector

[www.basscom.org](http://www.basscom.org)

# WHY OUTSOURCE YOUR BUSINESS IN BULGARIA

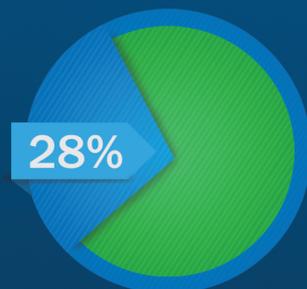
## FACTS & STATS

The mix of multilingual talent pool, competitive operational costs, cultural proximity and expertise in the outsourcing industry make Bulgaria one of the best outsourcing destination in Europe.

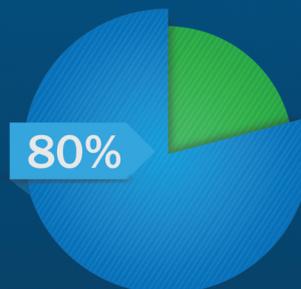
## POLITICAL AND MACROECONOMIC STABILITY

- Stable parliamentary democracy safeguarded by ethnic diversity and social tolerance.
- EU, NATO and WTO member
- Legal system harmonized with EU requirements
- Member of the International Organization of the Francophonie
- Fixed exchange rate to the Euro
- More than **€10** billion in EU funds
- EU lowest operational costs

## LARGE TALENT POOL



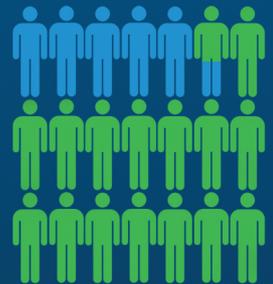
University degrees:  
28% of population



Approximately 80% of  
university graduates speak  
English



Dominant  
foreign  
languages:  
**English** 25%  
**Russian** 23%  
**German** 8%  
**French** 2%



15 000 out of 60 000  
students annually  
pursue a university  
degree in language  
studies including  
Chinese, Japanese,  
Hindi, Scandinavian,  
and Slavic languages.

## CULTURAL COMPATIBILITY & STRATEGIC LOCATION AND TIME ZONE



Cultural proximity to European and US-based clients in terms of business attitude and ethics



Culturally and linguistically aligned to the western business world



Southeastern Europe  
Time zone: EET (UTC+2)  
Service for worldwide clients

## LEADING EDGE TECHNOLOGY & DATA SECURITY



8th in the world and 5th in Europe in Internet speed



Reliable IT infrastructure ensures business continuity in the event of equipment failures.



The security and privacy of confidential business information is safeguarded by regulations and data protection practices employed by the BPO companies

## OUTSOURCING EXPERIENCE

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES:



Maturity and robust growth of the BPO sector: the number of employed in the Bulgarian BPO sector grew from 0 to around 15 000 over the last 10 years



Political stability compared to North Africa



Large pool of EU native speakers working in the BPO industry



Number one outsourcing destination in SEE according to A.T. Kearney



University programs such as Work and Travel, Erasmus and Internships in EU and USA enhance student's language skills



BPO experience in serving many industries: Travel, E-commerce, Finance, High-tech and Telecom

## SOURCES

- \* *Business Process Outsourcing in Bulgaria 2011*" Invest Bulgaria Agency
- \* *Invest in Bulgaria* Invest Bulgaria Agency
- \* *Europeans and their Languages 2012*" Eurobarometer

# INDUSTRY INSIGHTS & CASES

- 21 - Outsourcing And Personal Data
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# The Intersection Point between Outsourcing and Personal Data Transfers

By Anna Rizova, Managing Partner, Wolf Theiss Bulgaria and  
Hristina Dzhevlekova, Associate, Wolf Theiss Bulgaria

The outsourcing industry in Bulgaria has been growing steadily during the past few years, thereby turning Bulgaria into one of the main outsourcing centers in Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, due to the favourable market conditions in the outsourcing sector, the expectations of the Bulgarian Outsourcing Agency ("BOA") are that this tendency will remain and the annual revenue of the outsourcing industry may reach up to 2 milliards or 3% of the Bulgarian GDP by 2018 (1).

These numbers confirm both the significance and the fast development temps of the Bulgarian outsourcing market.

## Outsourcing in Bulgaria

The outsourcing business should consider a number of local law requirements and compliance. Outsourcing of services or production, for example, inevitably requires close co-operation between the outsourcing provider and the customer, usually involving day-to-day transfers of huge amounts of information (e.g. in terms of deliverables, information on clients, transfers of data bases, customer care' reports, activity reports, etc). In practice, a significant part of this exchange of information comprises of personal data, i.e. information relating to individuals allowing such to be identified. In the context of business globalization, exchange/transfer of personal data,

especially outside the boundaries of the European Union, has turned into one of the "hot topics" in the European (and Bulgarian) legislation, thereby posing the challenge of how to ensure proper protection of personal data without impeding the business processes.

Good understanding of local data protection requirements is of key significance to the outsourcing companies which are obliged to ensure high level of data protection. On the other hand, experience shows that knowledge of admissible models for data transfers may indeed facilitate any outsourcing model.

This article aims to give light to some specifics and expected de-

developments in the field of personal data transfers impacting the daily activities of the Bulgarian outsourcing companies. The first part of this article briefly reviews the options for data transfers currently available under the local legislation. Since the European Union is on its final steps to adopt a major reform in the data protection rules across Europe, the second part emphasizes on the forthcoming amendments to the regulatory framework on personal data transfers.

## Personal data transfers under the current data protection framework

The Personal Data Protection Act ("PDPA"), fully implementing the Data Protection Directive, provides the current framework on data transfer, data storage and processing.

In line with the European legislation, the Bulgarian PDPA sets forth the grounds under which a Bulgarian data controller (e.g. an outsourcing company) may conduct transfers of personal data. There are two regimes for such transfers depending on the territory and reach of the transfer:

### 1. Data Transfers across EU and EEA

Transfers of personal data between companies within EU and

in any other country member of the European Economic Area ('EEA') can be implemented without any authorizations or permissions being required from the data protection authorities.

### 2. Data Transfers to third countries

However, data transfers to third countries outside of the EU/EEA are strictly regulated. The PDPA differentiates between cases where it could be assumed the particular transfer complies with the EU standards for data protection and cases where further compliance review is required. In the latter option, the local supervisory authority for data protection – the Commission for Personal Data Protection ('CPDP') – shall explicitly authorise the transfer prior its initiation (subject to some exceptions).

#### 2.1. Third countries' data transfers not requiring permission by the CPDP

The European and the Bulgarian legislation recognize that personal data transfers outside EU/EEA shall be considered per se compliant, if they are based on:

- Adequacy decisions of the European Commission ('EC') – the EC has adopted decisions confirming that personal data legislation in certain third countries provides adequate level of protection in accordance with the European standards and trans-

fers and thus shall be considered safe. Therefore, if a Bulgarian outsourcing company transfers personal data to any of these 'approved' third countries, such transfers will be exempted from the CPDP' permission procedure.

In this case the CPDP need only be notified of the intended transfers (for information purposes).

- Standard Contractual Clauses Contracts - the EC has developed model contracts setting forth standard contractual clauses for transfers of personal data from EU to third countries for which no adequacy decision under the above point has been adopted. The standard contractual clauses are developed to ensure that adequate safeguards to the protection of the privacy and fundamental rights/freedoms of individuals are put in place.

Thus, if an outsourcing company initiates a data transfer to a third country based on the EC standard contractual clauses it would not need to seek prior permission from the CPDP. Again only a notification for information purposes shall be filed.

#### 2.2. Third countries' data transfers requiring explicit permission by the CPDP

- Adequacy decision ad hoc - where there is no adequacy decision of the EC and the parties have not concluded standard contractual clauses, Bulgarian law re-

quires that the CPDP permits on a case-by-case basis transfers of personal data and ensures that the third country provides an adequate level of protection of the personal data (i.e. adequacy decision ad hoc). In such case, an outsourcing company should request the CPDP to permit the transfer in advance.

- Explicit consent or other justifiable grounds - transfers of personal data outside EU could be allowed if the data controller, e.g. the outsourcing company, has obtained a prior consent of the concerned individual/s or has grounded the transfer on other recognized legitimate grounds, listed in the PDPA. However, even in such cases, the CPDP should assess a number of circumstances before permitting the transfer. In practice data controllers rely on such grounds less frequently as permission procedure before the CPDP is still required.

- Appropriate safeguards adopted internally between the parties - another option for an outsourcing company to ground transfer of personal data outside EU would be to provide evidence to the CPDP that appropriate safeguards to the data transfers have been put in place in the internal relations between the outsourcing company and the non-EU located company (usually under a contract for data transfer). It should be noted that the PDPA does not currently recognize in-

tra-group company rules (such as Binding Corporate Rules) as a separate legal ground for transfer of personal data. Under this scenario, safeguards adopted internally between the parties still need to be assessed and permitted by the CPDP.

- US Safe Harbour - the EC and the US have entered into an explicit agreement setting a 'safe-harbour' (transfers exempted from permission) for US companies which have adopted certain Safe Harbour Principles (generally - to comply with EU data protection rules). However, Bulgarian CPDP continues to require transfers of personal data to US 'safe harbour' companies to pass the general permission procedure.

### Upcoming EU legislative changes in the transfers of personal data

In 2012 the EC suggested an overall update of the Data Protection Directive and made a legislative proposal for a new Regulation, setting out one common framework for data protection in all member states (introduced by the Regulation as a directly applicable piece of European legislation).

Since the Regulation is close to its final adoption, the main

amendments affecting the current regime of transfers of personal data are outlined below:

#### 1. Additional legal grounds for legitimate transfers to third countries.

As a general note, the draft Regulation aims at facilitating the flow of personal data both outside the EU/EAA and within international companies (i.e. intra-group transfers) by introducing additional grounds for permitted data transfers. The most important among them are:

- Adequacy decisions –it is suggested that EC should be able to take adequacy decisions not only for the entire territory of a third country, but, in particular for one or more economic sectors within such third country. It is considered that this would provide more flexible and time efficient approach by focusing the assessment of the EC on sectors mainly impacted by data transfers.

- Standard contractual clauses - In addition to the current regime which allows only the EC to adopt standard contractual clauses regulating data transfers, the draft Regulation would authorize national data protection authorities also to adopt such clauses. Therefore, that would lead to a larger variety of standard contractual clauses available to data controllers as well as to locally prepared standard con-

tractual clauses which may reflect certain particularities of the respective country.

- Binding corporate rules - The draft Regulation officially recognizes BCRs as a separate legal ground for data transfers applicable for all EU Member States. However, it still requires that the BCRs should be approved by the competent supervisory authority prior to their implementation.

- Derogations - The draft Regulation also sets forth explicitly listed derogations under which, in the absence of an adequacy decision or appropriate safeguards, the transfers of personal data to third countries could be undertaken without need of explicit permission. The derogations in their majority follow the legislative grounds mentioned in 'Explicit consent or other justifiable grounds' (see above), with certain novelties. Transfers which cannot be qualified as frequent or massive will be allowed on the basis of a derogation (aiming to protect the legitimate interest of the data controller or the processor) under the condition that the controller/processor have assessed all circumstances surrounding the data transfer. However, the suggestions described above are still negotiated by the EU Council and Parliament.

- Approved codes of conduct and certification mechanism - With

respect to the current draft of the Regulation it has been additionally suggested that another two grounds for transfers of data are added, namely approved codes of conduct and certification mechanism. Approved codes of conduct present internal rules regulating the overall data processing within a certain company. The certification mechanism provides for an additional procedure under which the national data protection authority may certify that a particular company is fully compliant with the data protection requirements (i.e. ensures adequate level of protection of the personal data) thereby allowing it to freely conduct data transfers to third countries or within its corporate group. However, the inclusion of both of these grounds still remains under discussion.

## 2. Reduced administrative burden

The introduction of additional grounds for transfers of personal data to countries outside the EU/EEA not requiring permissions by the data protection authorities is aimed at reducing the administrative burden in such transfers without such reduction being at the detriment of the security of the transfers. The overall intention of the draft Regulation is to impose higher preliminary responsibility on the data controllers while leaving to the data

protection authority mainly controlling functions.

## 3. Increased Fines

The draft Regulation provides for significantly increased fines for non-compliance with data protection' obligations, including for transfers of personal data, in comparison to the current provisions. Such fines may reach up to 5% of the company's annual revenue under the new Regulation.

## References:

1. *The legal definition of 'personal data' is given in art. 2 of the Bulgarian Law on Personal Data Protection. Most common examples of personal data are – names, PIN numbers, date/place of birth, ID card' data, e-mails, telephone numbers, etc.*

2. *Third countries already cleared by the EC are, among others, Switzerland, Canada, Andora, etc. All decisions currently adopted by the EC for the purposes of establishing the adequacy of the personal data protection' regimes in third countries can be found at: <https://www.cpdp.bg/?p=element&aid=438>*

3. *The EC have developed several types of standard contractual clauses, depending on the type of the transfers and the quality of the parties (e.g. standard contractual clauses for 'data controller-to-data controller' transfers and 'data controller-to-data processor' transfers).*

4. BCR provide rules and mechanisms for processing and transfer of personal data within multinational group of companies, thereby imposing the same standards for the personal data in each company within the group no matter of its location (within or out of EU). BCRs are recognized by a number of countries including within EU as a separate legal ground for allowing free data transfers within the concerned group.

### The authors:



**Anna Rizova** is head of the Wolf Theiss Sofia office and has more than fifteen years of professional experience. Anna has gained specialist know-how in sectors such as HR/Recruitment and ICT & BPO. She focuses on employ-

ment issues in the ICT & BPO industry and has considerable expertise in practices entailing regulatory employment requirements, agreements and legal restrictions for senior managers, employment structures and alternative options in accordance with the Bulgarian legislation. Her recent mandates include advising the leading European IT infrastructure provider on employment issues in Bulgaria and Macedonia, in particular restructuring the personnel of FTS in both jurisdictions, reduction of staff, advice on exit costs as per local law and contracts; advising one of the world's leading organizations providing management consulting, technology and outsourcing services on the regulatory regime for operating recruitment/HR activities in Bulgaria; advising a leading computer technology corporation on the application and compliance of their framework employment agreements in Bulgaria. Anna can be contacted at +359 2 861 3700 or at [anna.rizova@wolftheiss.com](mailto:anna.rizova@wolftheiss.com)

**Hristina Dzhevlekova** is as an Associate at Wolf Theiss with over five years of experience in the areas of corporate, competition and employment law. Hristina's recent experience includes ad-

vising multinational leading ITO companies on employment and data protection issues; advising one of the leading research-based pharmaceutical companies on implementation of a new management system, including the termination of management agreements; advising Concentrix on the transfer of employees legal aspects upon the acquisition of IBM customer service business in Bulgaria; as well as advising a leading travel metasearch engine on employment law issues, including tax and social security matters related to payroll providers. Hristina can be contacted at +359 2 861 3700 or at [hristina.dzhevlekova@wolftheiss.com](mailto:hristina.dzhevlekova@wolftheiss.com)



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The Intelligent Choice

# Enterprise Mobility Management – Process Optimization In A Distribution Company

By Nadejda Karkeleva, Project manager at DigiMark Bulgaria

It is unquestionable that mobile technologies have become more and more important in all aspects of our daily life. According to Business Insider, one in every five people in the world owns a smartphone. Research shows that ownership of smartphones has even outgrown that of personal computers in mid- 2012.

It is evident that smartphones have also become an indispensable part of the business world. However, it is not only because of faster reply to emails, work on the road, easier interaction with colleagues using various application or access to reservations and navigation tools. All these features and benefits affect productivity and business performance but there is a lot more to it. Enterprise mobility management

is the trend that applies rapid changes to the entire enterprise ecosystem. Organizations have been leveraging technology over the years in order to assist their employees and engage their customers. Consequently, with smartphones gaining dominance in the mobile world, the number of enterprises adopting mobility to reach higher operational efficiency and to enhance profits is also constantly increasing (Sathyan et al., 2012).

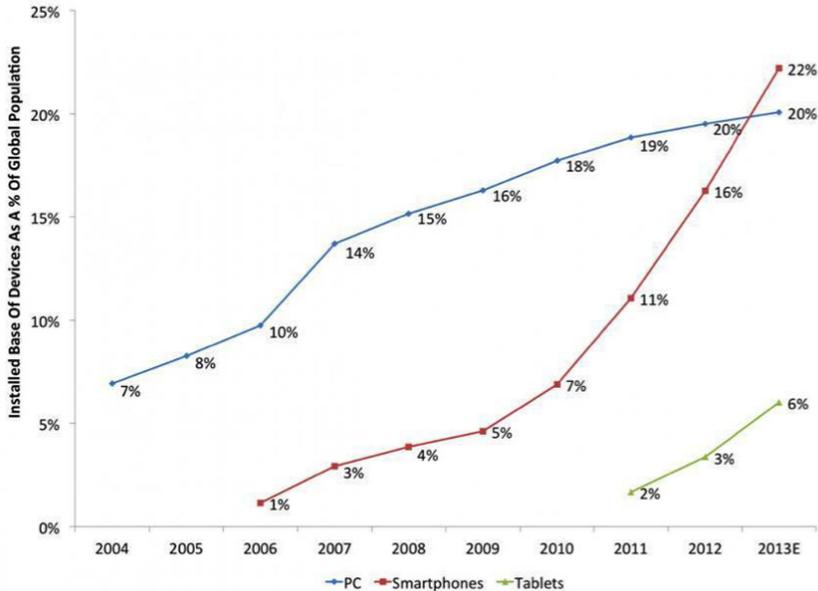
Broadly, the enterprise mobility is classified in two groups- customer-centric mobility and internal enterprise mobility. This paper will look into the latter by giving a recent real life example.

An international distribution company in Bulgaria recently

adopted operational workforce mobility system intending to bring down its operational expenditure. Prior to this advancement the enterprise had all its sales personnel do extensive paper work manually which later was transferred in excel spread sheets again by hand having previously closed an old CRM system. The main responsibilities of these employees is to go to shops which sell their products, write reports, take pictures of the store's condition, follow the sales by store, prepare paper orders to the warehouse and so on.

All this caused a considerable waste of company resources and lack of effective monitoring. The need of technological improvement called for immediate action. Senior management came

## Global Device Penetration Per Capita



Source: BII estimates, Gartner, IDC, Strategy Analytics, company filings, World Bank 2013

up with the enterprise mobility solution of DigiMark which was successfully adopted by the personnel. It represents a cloud based platform consisting of management platform capable of delivering custom reports and statistics in instantaneously. It is connected with a mobile application for smartphones and tablets which allows the employees to plan their workday, distribute tasks and report in real time the whole work process via the app using prepared templates. The management on the other hand can assign tasks and follow their status via the platform. It can also monitor productivity by receiving automated reports on a daily, weekly monthly and yearly base.

The Enterprise Mobility platform solution represents a cloud

based platform deployed on a scalable server infrastructure so the server cost could be minimized. The platform consists of a MySQL and/or PostgreSQL database infrastructure which is empowered by a PHP based framework. The framework is designed from scratch by the development team and is easily customizable according to the specific business needs and business processes flow. There are large pool of automated functions, cronjob scripts and scheduling tasks picked according to the needs. The framework is equipped with Push notification scheme serving real time communication and task assignment between employees and management team. The framework is covered by a JSON communication layer which is serving the data flow to the Mobile

Applications and Management Panels. The communication layer uses JWE (web encryption) of the data and OAuth 2.0 for user and session authentication. The web frontends of the management panels are coded on PHP with HTML5 and CSS3 face.

The mobile applications are fully native which are served as Objective C for iOS, Java for Android and C# for Windows Phone devices. The platform is utilizing almost all capabilities of the mobile devices to serve useful data to the businesses, the GPS localization of the employees, picture and video reporting, door and premises access using Bluetooth 2.0 and NFC, token algorithms for the high security access and more.

Three interesting functionalities of the mobile apps which have been implemented for the specific client of the case are: the NFC tags in the cars and doors which serve data to the server for when the employees enter the cars and buildings; the Bluetooth connected thermo sensors which serve data for the temperature in the load compartments of the cars and busses; and the third - implementation is a fuel level sensor which serves data via Bluetooth to the mobile apps as well.

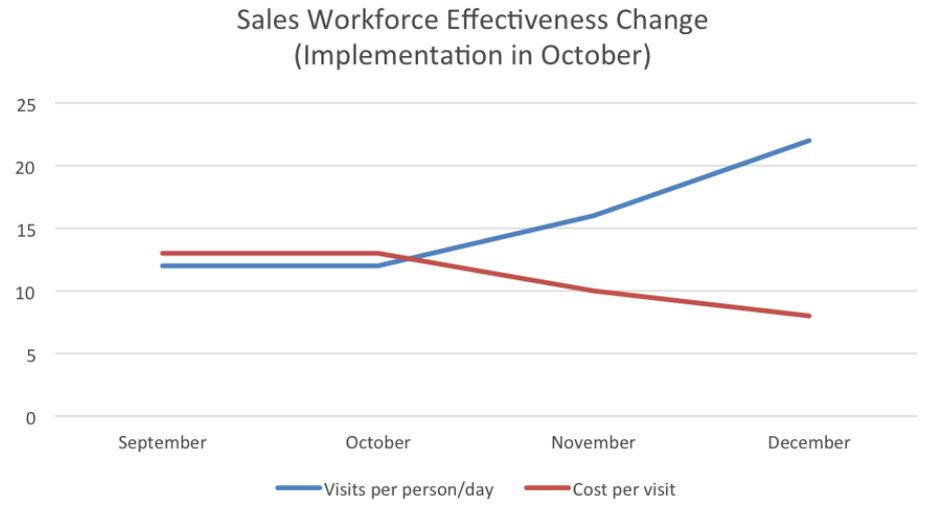
All this data enables the management to create custom data slicing, reporting and analyzing via the platform.

# CASE - ENTERPRISE MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

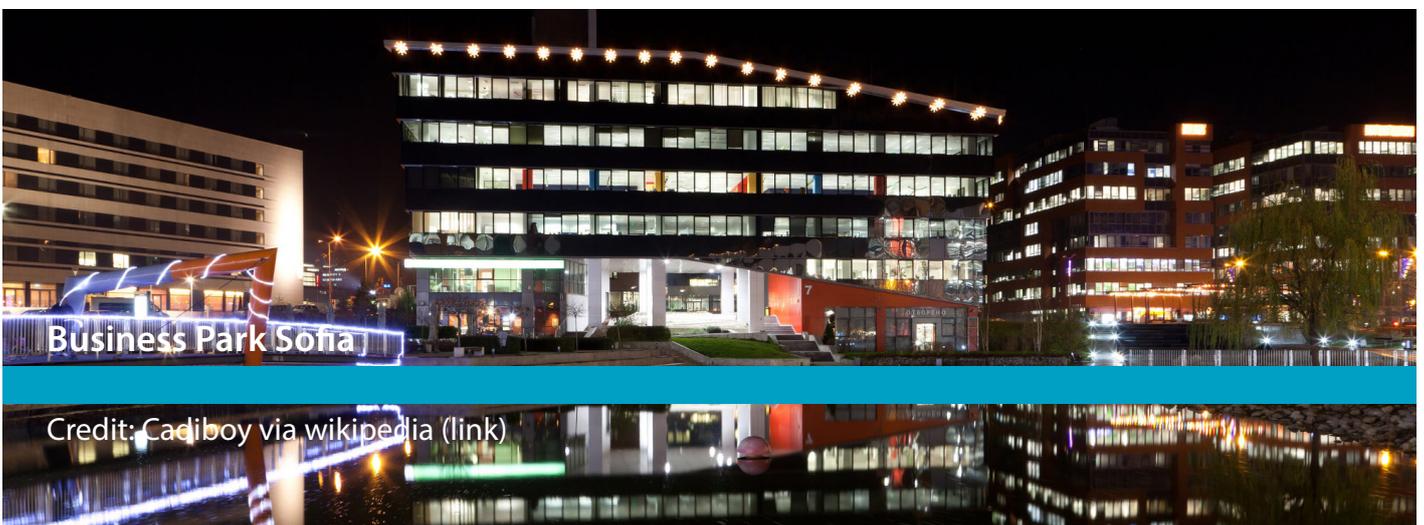
The graph clearly depicts how workforce effectiveness level rises with the implementation of the enterprise mobility system. In less than two months visits per person a day have increased significantly while the costs per visit go down.

The company which adopted the new system has encountered other sustainable benefits as well. Some of them are: optimization of time and resources, effective control, implementation of remote task management, facilitated reports and location tracking reports of all employees. All the workflow data is contained in the platform so that various analyses have become automated.

**The author:** Nadejda Karkeleva, Project manager at DigiMark™. Nadejda has more 4 years of experience in different business fields, including sales and digital marketing. Lately, she works in the mobile industry together



with DigiMark's team of inspired and motivated professionals, sharing their values and beliefs that mobile solutions are the future of business. Together with the management team she works on continuously improving the company's processes in order to surpass customers' expectations. Nadejda holds an MBA (with honors) from Cardiff University of Wales and a BA from the American University in Bulgaria.

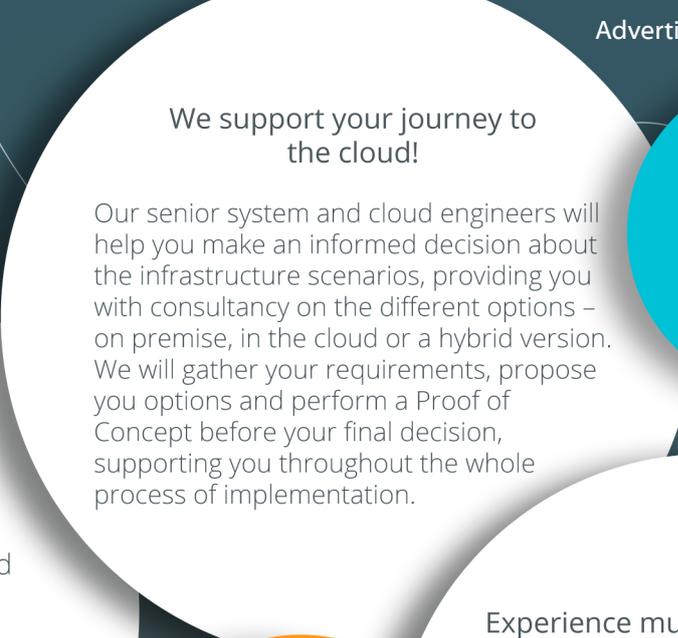




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Tel: + 49 69 505047 122  
Fax: + 49 69 5050470 450  
Contact: Ms. Irina Mavrova  
irina.mavrova@bulpros.com

Chicago, IL USA  
1269 Deerfield Parkway  
Suite 302  
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089  
Tel: +1 224 388 1719  
Contact: Mr. Nikolai Tagarov  
nikolai.tagarov@bulpros.com

Sofia, Headquarters  
Sofia 1766, Bulgaria  
Mladost 4, Business Park  
Sofia  
Build. 4, 5. Floor  
Tel: + 359 2 489 5725  
Fax: + 359 2 489 58 83  
info@bulpros.com

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# Distributed Development Model - Nearshore Technology Team In Bulgaria

By Steve Newland, Associate Director at Javelin Group, London, in partnership with Questers Resourcing Ltd.

Javelin Group is Europe's leading – and largest – specialist firm of retail strategy consultants. For large retailers and brands all over the world, they plan and implement strategies to enable them to anticipate and respond to the rapid changes in customer shopping habits, retail technologies and the competitive environment, to ensure that they thrive in the coming decade. Javelin Group provides consultancy services in retail strategy, operations, technology and locations, and its systems integration practice builds world-class e-commerce website solutions.

In 2008 the demand for Javelin Group's systems integration services was growing, but there was

a need to reduce rates without compromising quality in order to remain competitive.

## Philosophy

So Javelin Group set out to establish a remote development centre. The search was guided by the principle that the team could only deliver to Javelin Group standards if it was fully integrated with the Javelin Group team, which meant that it should operate at the same time as its London counterpart, feel part of the company, and share its culture.

## Why Bulgaria?

This philosophy immediately ruled out outsourcing where

individuals are, ultimately, governed by another company with its own culture and ethos. It also narrowed the search to Europe where the overlap of working hours is considerable.

Javelin Group engaged its own consultancy team to conduct a feasibility study of potential cities using the PESTLE (Political, Economic, Social, Technology, Legal, Environment) assessment method. This provided a short list of locations, including Sofia, which were explored further.

What Javelin Group found in Bulgaria was not just a wealth of talent but also a remarkable similarity to the British work culture, ethos, and sense of humour.

It did not take long to establish a small team of 4 exceptionally talented developers and the firm has not looked back since.

### What happened next?

Initially the developers were brought in to bolster systems integration projects led from London, but the talented people who were hired soon progressed and it was not long before Sofia had its own Lead Developers steering major client projects. With the success of the Development team, Javelin Group branched out to set up a Technical Support team based entirely out of Sofia, and other roles, such as QAs and infrastructure engineers were introduced to further support projects.

Six years on and Javelin Group has a team of 70 people across a variety of disciplines and offices in both Sofia and Plovdiv.

### Clients

What Javelin Group discovered quickly was that clients do not mind where team members live; what they care about is how they are looked after. Javelin Group recruits very carefully - employing only those who extoll the company's values, and, as a result, the service provided to clients remains consistent (but at a lower cost).

### Challenges

The set up challenges were relatively few with Questers providing key support to help Javelin Group comply with local laws and regulations and overseeing recruitment campaigns - but that's not to say there wasn't a lot to learn along the way...

### The voice of experience

Integrating a distributed development team into the main office requires considerable time and effort on both sides.

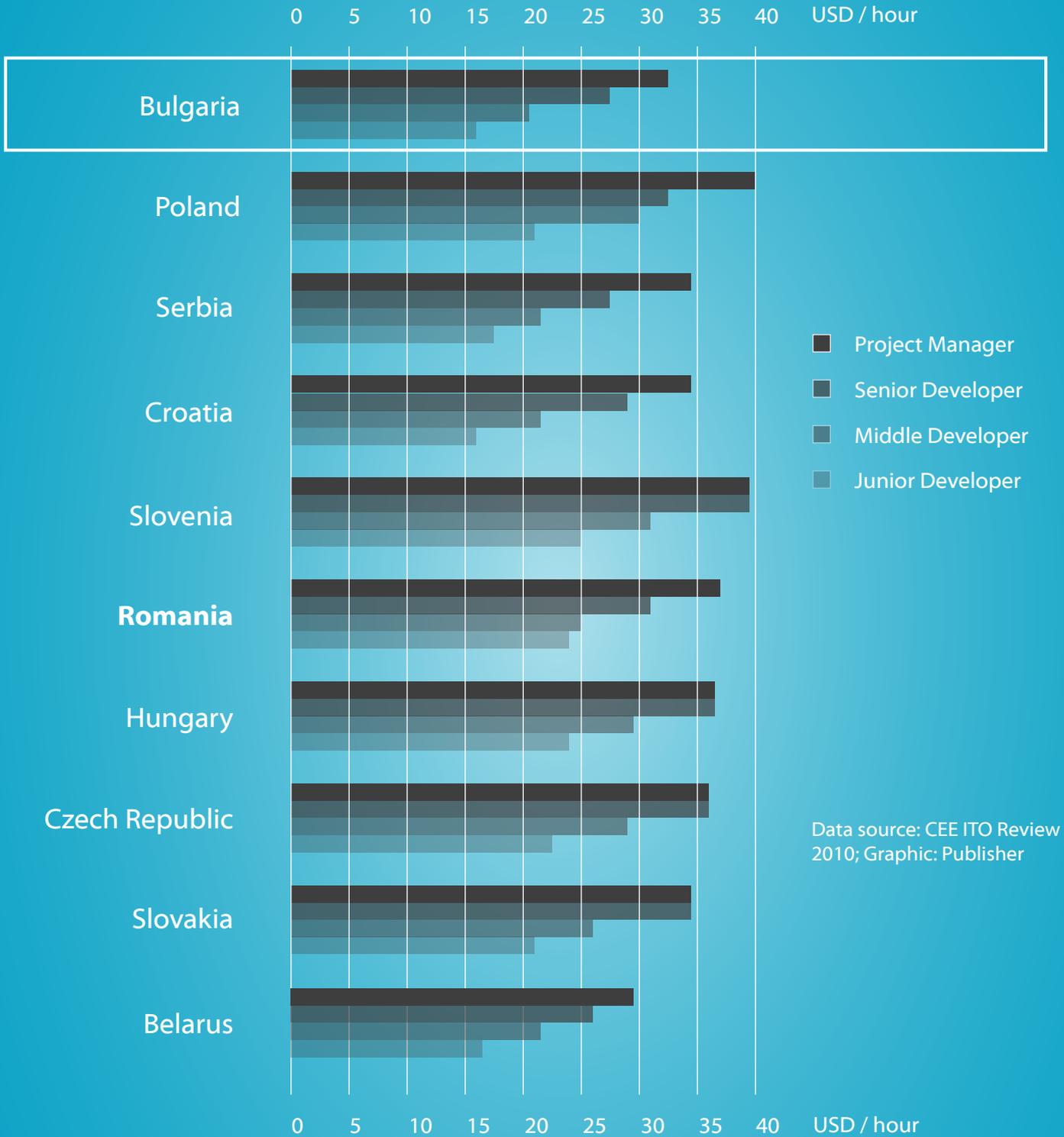
- Ensure staff travel regularly between offices. Monthly managerial trips are essential even when there are established local managers. Employee visits are always beneficial as they foster understanding and relationships between parties.
- Align infrastructure between offices so all employees can work in any office. This will encourage travel and reduce IT overhead. Use the same colour scheme and corporate branding so the surroundings are familiar and recognisably part of the same company.
- Invest in a quality video conferencing set-up and encourage its use over skype or similar, so employees can see each other on a regular basis.
- And, finally, to ensure the distributed team feels like part of

the company, treat them like they are part of the company. As far as possible align the benefits and perks, give them equal respect and equal opportunities. Include them on company updates (whether formal or social) and herald their successes which, hopefully, there will be many.

**The author:** Steve joined Javelin Group in 2007 and is now an Associate Director. He leads the Development team, and is responsible for development methodologies, best practices, and the implementation of multi-channel projects through delivery management. An e-commerce specialist for almost 15 years, Steve has overseen the delivery of 10 full website builds and more than a dozen major multi-channel projects on IBM Sterling, hybris, Commerce Server, Hippo and Demandware, as well as providing occasional consultancy on project governance to retailers and their systems integrators.



# CEE IT SALARIES



# The new way for migrating Oracle Forms in an ADF environment

By Todor Gigilev, Head of Oracle Department at Dreamix Ltd, Bulgaria

There are thousands of enterprises that are currently using Oracle Forms for creating data entry systems that access an Oracle database. Oracle Forms are a proven technology dating back to the 1990s. It is very stable but as anything in life its time has come. As a next generation of programming stack Oracle has come up with Fusion Middleware. The web technology included in it is called ADF and is based on JEE. Currently ADF is the preferred approach for new web-based system development for enterprises.

However, what are companies and corporations supposed to do with their Oracle forms in which they have heavily invested money and time? While Oracle is saying that it won't stop the Forms'

support it is evident that the company is pushing towards the ADF. Naturally the solution is to migrate your Oracle Forms to the newer ADF technology which offers many modern features that improve company competitiveness and opens up space for SOA, BPM and Mobile innovations.

## Migration of Oracle Forms to ADF

Many companies have great business achievements using Oracle Forms & Reports. Such cases are Fadata and Technoclass. Fadata is software vendor, providing Insurance CRM to more than 110 companies around 20 countries, ranked No2 insurance software

by Gartner. Technoclass provides ERP systems for the heavy industry. Both of them needed help for the migration of several hundred Oracle Forms to ADF. Every migration is a very complex process. Some of the best practices include end to end project management, building of custom migration process and training a support team onsite. Furthermore, it is important to participate in the Oracle ADF communities with technical articles, tips and discussions, to be aware of the latest trends. Some of the technologies needed for the successful migration are Java EE, Oracle ADF, Oracle Business Components, Oracle Forms, Oracle DB, WebLogic server, PL/SQL, HTML, JavaScript and Ajax.

## Taking full advantage of Oracle Fusion Middleware programming stack

Whether you have migrated your applications to ADF or started developing them from scratch, you will soon be tempted to use the other benefits of the modern enterprise architecture. Oracle Fusion Middleware stack provides powerful and integrated tools such as SOA Suite, BPM and BI.

Deploying these to action has given great results for a leading airplane company. The result was that the company moved its operations to the next level, organizing its internal workflow using BPM (Business Processes Management) system. This Business Processes Management system was fully integrated with the rest of the company's software systems (such as SAP, Financial, Document, HR), which has led to significant performance increase. The operations team no longer needed to use many different sources of information, instead they had a single point of action that consolidated all the needed data, thus decreasing the number of mistakes and missed deadlines. Thanks to the totally integrated Oracle programming stack and the combination of many technologies, this complex system totally satisfied the customer needs. More at [www.dreamix.eu](http://www.dreamix.eu)

## FormADF App

Migration projects always involve a lot of hard work and uncertainty. This may lead to a considerable frustration for managers, staff and users.

There is a solution now. The developers can now concentrate directly on migration and creation of new ADF forms as there will be no need to invest in development of application framework and infrastructure for the new ADF forms. Additionally, the old Oracle Forms and Reports can be integrated into a new ADF application immediately thus eliminating the waiting time for the completion of the whole process. The users can gather feedback on the newly developed functionality by simultaneously running Oracle Forms and ADF forms. Moreover, one can migrate form by form and gradually replace old with new ones avoiding the Big Bang approach that may take more than a year. And if the end users have problems or need time to get familiar with the new ADF form, they can always go back and open the old Oracle Form avoiding the frustration. Usually the migration projects include modernization of 100 to 1000 forms and many reports, which might be quite expensive. FormADF App (<http://formadfapp.com/>) reduces the costs by saving money on consultants for creation of ADF Application

Framework. Also the user doesn't need to rewrite the existing reports. Likewise, company will fit into the budget by breaking-up the migration project in several stages. Packages of Oracle Forms can be migrated into ADF while keeping the existing Forms at place. This way there will be a fully functional application with a mix of ADF and Forms screens. Finally, the users will avoid the hurdles and the bad feelings when they see an application that looks completely different and foreign to their enterprise. They will have a fully customizable and adaptive design that will look and feel like it has been developed in-house.

**About the author:** Todor Gigilev, Head of Oracle Department at Dreamix Ltd, is a professional with extensive experience in the whole Oracle Fusion Middleware stack. He has consulted worldwide leading companies like BNP Pariba for their Oracle Forms to ADF migrations. Currently he is responsible for the architecture of SOA, BPM and ADF systems. Contact Todor at: [todor.gigilev@dreamix.eu](mailto:todor.gigilev@dreamix.eu)



# COMPANY PROFILES & CONTACTS

Profiles and contacts of Bulgarian ITO & BPO services providers



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vendors such as Microsoft (Gold Application Development competency), Cisco, VMware, Red Hat, IBM etc. BULPROS is a co-founder of the Bulgarian Outsourcing Association, member of the German Outsourcing Association and AmCham. The company is headquartered in Sofia, Bulgaria. Our global locations include Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Plovdiv, Varna and Burgas, Bulgaria, Las Vegas and Chicago, USA.

BULPROS has also developed 3 own products – a Cloud Platform, Staffico and Jabborate.

**Contact:** Mr. Ivaylo Slavov  
T.+ 359 885 66 22 34  
E. [ivaylo.slavov@bulpros.com](mailto:ivaylo.slavov@bulpros.com)  
W. [www.bulpros.com](http://www.bulpros.com)

## DESTINATIONS



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T. +001-516-833-3300 (New York, USA)  
T. +359-2-460-4200 (Sofia, Bulgaria)  
E. [info@bianor.com](mailto:info@bianor.com)  
W. [www.bianor.com](http://www.bianor.com)

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can, European and Asian market. The company's specialty is in developing cloud based cross platform apps, which are available for large variety of devices and platforms providing dynamically manageable solution in the same time.

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**Contact:** Nikolay Angelov, Managing Director  
T. +359 884975695  
E. [contact@digimark.bg](mailto:contact@digimark.bg)  
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The agile approach combined with technical skills allowed us to work with leading companies from Switzerland, Germany, UK to USA in industries like insurance, financials, telecommunications, aviation and healthcare. We are members of BASSCOM and EEN.

We are filled with expertise, know-how, love and passion for

consulting and coding. In the area of project management we have adopted agile methodologies for software delivery such as Scrum and Kanban. Moreover, we are highly qualified software specialists skilled at Oracle Fusion Middleware stack - ADF, BPM, SOA, WebCenter; Oracle Forms & DB; Java EE - Spring, JBoss, Struts, Swing, SOAP; and Business Intelligence - QlikView, Jaspersoft, Pentaho ([www.datakite.com](http://www.datakite.com)).

Dreamix processes are carved and formed on the basis of the feedback we gained from our previous projects with leading companies from all around the world. Our huge experience and know-how give us the knowl-

edge to cover the whole vertical: from consulting (advising what software to use) to development and implementation. Our professionals work from our Bulgarian office and if needed they are on a two hours flight to almost anywhere in Europe. You will make your own decision whether to nearshore the entire development process or just some parts such as testing or maintenance.

**Contact:** Sofia, 1700, Bulgaria, 13A "Academik Nikolay Stoyanov" str.

T. +1 347 918 3598 (USA)

T. +359 88 4116309 (Bulgaria)

E. [office@dreamix.eu](mailto:office@dreamix.eu)

W. [www.dreamix.eu](http://www.dreamix.eu)

## DESTINATIONS



In 2007 we have pioneered an alternative to conventional outsourcing. We call this model AsONE. Questers is a leading IT employer, voted TOP ICT Employer 2014 in Bulgaria. We have offices in Sofia and Plovdiv where we host our clients' own IT and software development team.

We provide IT development and support resources for international companies ranging from start-ups to FTSE 250s.

We provide access to expert IT talents integrated as-one with our client's core team. We address IT resourcing needs and help increase productivity in a low-risk and flexible way aligned with your company culture and strategy.

AsONE teams are fully dedicated to each client and recruited against your specific requirements. Our HR teams take care of all admin, recruitment, employment, and facilitating aspects of these relationships. We have developed expertise, processes and systems to support high performance and help you maximize

the value of your team. We concentrate on continuous efforts towards motivation, qualification and making your team members feel great being part of your team. Social benefits, training, events are also included in our offering helping us to maintain a strong reputation of an established, recognized and socially responsible employer in the local competitive labour markets.

**Contact:** Pierre Eynard-Machet, Sales Director

T. +44 207 030 37 62

E. [pierre@questers.com](mailto:pierre@questers.com)

W. [www.questers.com](http://www.questers.com)



Proxiad Bulgaria - Proxiad Bulgaria was founded in 2004 as the Bulgarian subsidiary of the Proxiad Group and is an IT services provider, focused on cost-efficient offshore/nearshore IT engineering and software development. With stable and dedicated teams, Proxiad Bulgaria offers a wide range of IT services covering the entire software life-cycle.

Situated in Sofia and Plovdiv, Proxiad Bulgaria already has more than 180 IT specialists. Proxiad Bulgaria offers you the opportunity to successfully design, implement and maintain

your IT systems, by externalizing these processes "offshore" in Bulgaria.

Established: 2004

Personnel: 180

Activities:

- Software development
- Project management
- Application maintenance
- Deployment
- Research and development
- Web design
- Mobile development
- Business process outsourcing
- Quality assurance & application testing
- Support (levels 1, 2 and 3)

- System, network and database administration

"Bulgaria is the ideal place to offer IT solutions. It is a unique place that has all the advantages: proximity, people & price." - Mark Rogers, CMO

**Contact:**

T. +359 (2) 980 91 03

E. [contact.bulgaria@proxiad.com](mailto:contact.bulgaria@proxiad.com)

W. [www.proxiad.com](http://www.proxiad.com)

## DESTINATIONS



ScaleFocus is an EU-based IT consultancy and software development company delivering product outsourcing and custom solutions to customers across EMEA and North America. Our key areas of expertise are:

- Industry-focused Mobile Solutions
- High Performance Integration and Business Process Management
- Business Intelligence and Predictive Analytics
- Software Quality Assurance and Automated Testing
- Modernization of Legacy Sys-

tems and Infrastructure

- Cloud Strategy, Infrastructure and Applications Implementation

We are able to quickly deploy resources remotely or relocate them on-demand. We provide the agility and cost-efficiency our customers need to face the challenges and opportunities of today's dynamic business environment. ScaleFocus outstanding professionals are recognized for their technical excellence, industry expertise and diverse background. The team provides services for IT consulting, outsourcing and end-to-end software solutions development and support, by utilizing mixed delivery models for on-site/near-shore implementation.

Partnerships: IBM Premier Business Partner, TIBCO Consulting Partner, Microsoft Partner – Gold Application Development Competency, Oracle Gold Partner, Teradata Implementation Partner, VMware Professional Partner, Citrix Service Provider, Veeam Pro-Partner

ScaleFocus is a triple award winner in Forbes Business Awards 2013 and awarded with Stevie Award for being Fastest-growing IT company of the Year in Europe, 2014.

**Contact:**

T. +359 2424 6484

E. [bizdev@scalefocus.com](mailto:bizdev@scalefocus.com)

W. [www.scalefocus.com](http://www.scalefocus.com)



Sofica Group JSC - Founded in 2004, Sofica Group has become the largest independent BPO provider in Bulgaria and one of the leading and fastest-growing outsourcing companies in Central and Eastern Europe aiming to become one of the TOP 5 BPO providers in the region until 2014.

The company currently has over 750 employees and an operational capacity of 1100 seats split in three locations – Sofia and Plovdiv, Bulgaria and Skopje, Macedonia. The main areas of

expertise are BPO (multi-lingual Contact Center services, F&A, procurement services, back office functions), ITO (Desktop and Application support – offsite and onsite, Contact Center as a Service, Build Operate Transfer Model) services, HRO (Full spectrum of HRO services - Recruitment process, outsourcing, Personnel administration, Payroll and benefit administration, Travel and expense administration).

Sofica Group provides world class services to global clients in the financial industry, telecom and IT through the strong and professional team, agile business model and state of the art technology. The competitive advantages of the company as a flex-

ible and result oriented partner are the ability to develop and provide customized tailor-made solutions and the professional CC and Telecom infrastructure.

Based on its experience, leading vendor's technologies, operational framework based on ISO and industry specific standards and the competitiveness of its locations, Sofica delivers high quality of services and adds value to its client's offerings.

**Sofica Group** JSC, Sofia, Bulgaria  
Business Park Sofia, building 3,  
1766 Sofia  
P: +359 2 400 85 00  
F: +359 2 400 85 02  
E: [info@sofica-group.com](mailto:info@sofica-group.com)  
W: [www.sofica-group.com](http://www.sofica-group.com)

## DESTINATIONS

### WOLF THEISS

Wolf Theiss is one of the leading law firms in Central, Eastern and South-eastern Europe (CEE/SEE). We have built our reputation on a combination of unrivalled local knowledge and strong international capability. We opened our first office in Vienna over 50 years ago. Our team now brings together over 300 lawyers from a diverse range of backgrounds, working in offices in 12 countries throughout the CEE/SEE region.

Our Sofia office has significant strength in all areas of corporate law, mergers and acquisitions

(M&A), IP/IT, tax, employment, competition, regulatory and compliance, energy, telecommunications, and media. We are able to translate international requirements to local circumstances and sit down with management teams and employees to ensure understanding.

Our lawyers have worked at senior levels for leading professional services, industrial and investment firms, have detailed knowledge of the political and business environment, and give practical legal support of the highest qual-

ity to a broad range of domestic and international clients.

We regularly act as a lead counsel on major transactions on the Bulgarian market. With a business-oriented approach, Wolf Theiss goes beyond providing legal advice. We aim to also look after our clients' commercial interests and put our extensive industry knowledge into practice.

**Contact:**  
T: +359 2 8613795  
E: [maria.kovalenko@wolftheiss.com](mailto:maria.kovalenko@wolftheiss.com)  
W: [www.wolftheiss.com](http://www.wolftheiss.com)

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# OUTSOURCING DESTINATION GUIDES SERIES

## PUBLISHER

*German Outsourcing Association* [www.outsourcing-verband.org](http://www.outsourcing-verband.org)

## EDITOR

*Stephan Fricke*

## PRODUCTION

*OC Communications* [www.outsourcing-marketing.org](http://www.outsourcing-marketing.org)

## CONTACT

[office@outsourcing-verband.org](mailto:office@outsourcing-verband.org)