



FMMW

GLOBAL ADVENTURES

2025

BULGARIA



GLOBAL ADVENTURES!

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Global Adventures! is a resource from Free Methodist World Missions.



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5235 Decatur Blvd., Indianapolis, IN 46241

Printed in the U.S.A.



Thanks for joining the adventure!



THEME VERSE

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

Psalms 96:1-3



Explore the Country

General Information, Interesting Facts and An Up-Close Focus



Explore God's Work

Learn about Free Methodist Ministries



Adventure Story

Enjoy a Story from the Field & Explore More



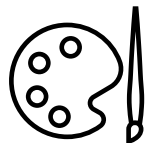
People on Adventure

Meet the Missionaries or Country Leaders



Adventure in Prayer

Walk Through a Prayer Activity



Adventures in Culture

Participate in Culture Through Language, Music, Games, Crafts and Food



EXPLORE THE COUNTRY



BULGARIA

Photo: Валентин Симеонов/Pixabay

Use the facts and information here to help your students learn about the country. (An accompanying PowerPoint presentation can be found on our website: fmwm.org/resources/children.)

Government: parliamentary republic (28 provinces)

Capital: Sofia

Population: 6,732,440

Area: 68,875 square miles, slightly larger than the state of Tennessee

General Terrain: fertile land, mostly mountains with lowlands in the north and southeast

Climate: mild climate with cold, damp winters and hot, dry summers

Major Cities: Sofia (1.288 million)

Languages: Bulgarian (77.3%), Turkish (7.9%), Romani (3.5%), Other (11.3%)

Religion: Bulgarian Orthodox (69.5%), Muslim (10.7%), Evangelical Christian (1.99%), Other (0.7%), no religion (15.9%)

Currency: lev



Photo: Edal Anton Lefterov/Creative Commons

National Symbol: lion

National Motto: "Unity makes strength."

Major Industries: electricity, gas, machinery and equipment, food, automotive parts, pharmaceutical products, coke, refined petroleum

Agricultural Products: wheat, maize, sunflower seed, milk, barley, potatoes, grapes, tomatoes

Natural Resources: copper, lead, zinc, coal, timber, agricultural land

Major Exports: refined petroleum, natural gas, garments, wheat

Interesting Facts:

- Bulgaria's national flower is the rose. The Rose Valley produces half of the world's rose oil.
- Bulgaria is the homeland of yogurt. It's eaten at nearly every meal.
- The mud and mineral springs of Bulgaria's lakes are believed to be like medicine. They are processed by the pharmaceutical industry.
- By age 9, children are learning at least one foreign language in school.
- Bulgarians read everywhere – even as they travel by bus or train. People read more than they watch television.
- Many people travel by train, which is cheap and reliable.
- Many Bulgarians vacation in July by going to the mountains or the coast of the Black Sea. Cities are hot and dusty, so many visit family in the countryside and help with fieldwork.
- While Bulgarians dress like Westerners, they like to dress nicely – even to go to the store.
- Bulgarians shake their heads for “yes” and nod for “no.”
- The bagpipe (*gaida*) is a traditional Bulgarian instrument.
- “Name Days” are celebrated in addition to birthdays.

Up Close - Bulgaria

Nature - Land, Water, Animals and Plants

There are two main mountain ranges, the Rila and the Pirin. The highest point in Bulgaria is Mount Musala, at 9,597 feet. Evergreen trees cover these mountain slopes.

The Danube River is the country's northern border and serves as the dividing line between Bulgaria and Romania.

Agricultural products include vegetables, fruit, tobacco, wheat, barley, sunflowers and sugar beets. Many families grow vegetables in the backyard or have a garden plot on the edge of the city. Bulgaria has around 20 different soil types.

The pink pelican, wild swan, deer, boar, badgers, wildcats, fox, wolf, mountain goat, bear, rabbit and



Photo: Jim Black/Pixabay



Photo: Elise Janssen/Unsplash

pheasant are animals and birds found in Bulgaria. There are 170 plant species found nowhere else in the world.

Arts

Bulgarians enjoy handiwork such as knitting, embroidery, pottery, woodworking and leatherworking. They also enjoy music. The *kaval* (a type of flute) and the *gaida* (bagpipes) are traditional folk instruments. There are even bagpipe bands. A circular dance called the *horo* (ho-RO) originated in Bulgaria. Dancers all hold hands and swirl to the music's rhythm.

Damask Rose

Because of Bulgaria's temperate climate, abundant sunshine and rich soil, it is an ideal location for growing the Damask Rose. This rose is rare, and perfumers and artisans around the world highly value the oil from the rose for use in perfumes and skincare products.

Bulgaria is the world's largest producer of rose oil, and they have yearly Rose Festivals.

The roses bloom only once a year and are harvested from late May to early June. The collection of roses is still done by hand and must be completed early in the morning, between 5 and 11 a.m., to have the harvest with the highest concentration of oil in the petals. To produce the oil, rose petals are placed in boilers with water. The water is then heated. This process is repeated multiple times until the fragrant oil emerges. It takes around 7,700 pounds of petals to produce one quart of rose oil.

Rose is also used in Bulgarian food such as pastries, beverages and desserts.

Things to do if you visit:

- Hike to the Seven Rila Lakes.
- Experience some of the culture by attending a Bulgarian Festival.
- Visit the Valley of Roses.
- Eat some *banitsa*, a traditional Bulgarian dish made with layers of phyllo pastry, eggs, yogurt and white cheese.



Photo: Edal Anton Lefterov/Creative Commons



EXPLORE GOD'S WORK



The Free Methodist Church in Bulgaria

Photo: Kevin Austin

Use the facts and information found here to help your students learn about the church in Bulgaria. (You will find photos in the accompanying PowerPoint presentation for Bulgaria on our website: fmwm.org/resources/children.)



Photo: Chance & Dee Dee Galloway

How the Free Methodist Church Began

Free Methodist work in the Balkans began in 1997 when missionaries Michael and Maria Long moved to Thessaloniki, Greece. From Greece, the Longs traveled extensively in Kosovo, Albania, Bulgaria and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, assisting with relief and development efforts, connecting with existing church networks, and encouraging believers. In Bulgaria, good relationships were established in the towns of Sandanski, Petrich and Samokov as well as in the capital city of Sofia. In April 2007, missionaries Al and Diane Mellinger arrived in Bulgaria to begin leadership-development ministries. A church plant was started in the southern Bulgarian city of Petrich. Relationships were established with a network of Bulgarian churches. They began to host regular workshops for pastors. Missionaries Chance and DeeDee Galloway joined the team in 2011, and David and Jill Sweet in 2017.

Present Ministries

FM Churches: 26

FM Membership: 816

FM Work Opened: 2007

Leadership Team: Stanimir Zahariev and George Iliev

In 2015, the Bulgarian church officially registered as the "Light and Life Church." Regular training events are held for pastors and church leaders; additional summer conferences occur for youth, families and women when possible.

There are currently 26 established churches and around 800 members. Chance and Dee Dee Galloway are currently the only resident FMWM missionaries in Bulgaria.

The St. John's Home, a safe house for at-risk girls, was established in 2020, and in 2022, it opened its doors to a refugee family coming out of Ukraine.

The home also serves to educate girls and young women about the dangers of human trafficking. Other active ministries include ongoing church-planting efforts in the Balkans region, particularly North Macedonia and Serbia.

An agricultural project, the Pure Farm, helps provide food for local communities.

Pray

- Pray for the St. John's Home and the girls and young women they seek to help.
- Pray for teams that regularly go to serve and minister to the people in this area.
- Pray for opportunities to disciple and train young leaders.
- Pray for God's provision for the needs of the communities where our churches serve.
- Pray new churches will be started.



Photo: Kevin Austin



Meet Pastor Lyuben Iliev

By Dee Dee Galloway and Lyuben Iliev

Pastor Lyuben Iliev, affectionately called “Lyubcho” by those who know him, grew up in the Roma neighborhood of Kyustendil. He was the middle son in a family of seven children. Although life was challenging for Lyubcho, he excelled in school, receiving his school’s highest marks on preparatory entrance exams for high school. Lyubcho loved learning and had a dream of attending medical school one day, but all of his dreams came crashing down when he turned 14. His father had problems with alcohol and often took out his frustration on his wife. Lyubcho decided to help his mother escape one of his father’s outbursts. This made his father even angrier – so angry that he kicked Lyubcho out of his home. Lyubcho had no place to sleep, no money and nothing with him other than the clothes he was wearing. Lyubcho went about trying to find a solution to his situation. He found work as a shepherd. This job meant he could sleep in the barn with the animals he tended. Now, his basic needs were met, but he could no longer attend school, which made him extremely sad.

One day, while visiting his brother in the city of Sofia, Lyubcho met his wife, Petra. They were eventually married and began their life together in the barn. Slowly, they worked and were able to find another more comfortable home.

Then, at age 18, Lyubcho was called for military service. Petra was expecting their second child. When Lyubcho heard the news about the birth of his second child, a fellow soldier gave him 5 leva (\$3) for a bus ticket to visit his family. After Lyubcho returned from the visit with his family, the soldier who had loaned him the money shared the gospel with Lyubcho. The two men had several more encounters in the following weeks. Finally, Lyubcho heard the message and trusted in Jesus as his Savior. His life completely changed.

Before he decided to follow Jesus, Lyubcho had struggled with feeling down and was always discouraged. Sometimes, he didn’t want to go on living. After he came to know Jesus, everything



Photo: Kevin Austin

changed. He now had joy and peace in his heart and mind. He couldn’t stop telling other people about Jesus. He had a new song in his heart!

After he completed his time in the military, he returned to Kyustandil and began working in construction. After many attempts to find a church where he and his family could belong, he began a meeting in his home. First, the children in the community came, and soon their parents followed. As Lyubcho shared the joy and peace he had found, more people were attracted to the meeting until it outgrew the space in his home.

Lyubcho began looking for a larger space for his church to meet. The first place was an attic in a member’s home. As a result of prayer, faithfulness and several miracles, money was raised to construct

a church building. The church was constructed in the center of a Roma community in Kyustendil.

In 2012, Lyubcho met Free Methodist missionaries Chance and Dee Dee Galloway. He saw their work and dedication to the community. They developed a partnership, and in the past 13 years together, they have shared the gospel in new areas, started new churches and trained new pastors. The St. John's

House was purchased and remodeled. Lyubcho and his wife, Petra, now oversee this safe house for girls.

Pastor Lyubcho is an example of how Jesus changes lives. He sings a new song of joy to the Lord. He sings the song to all he meets, declaring the wonderful things God has done and has yet to do! Will you sing with him?

EXPLORE MORE

Our theme verse says:

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

— Psalms 96:1-3



The verse says, "salvation day after day." Who was the person in the story who continued to proclaim the good news of Jesus day after day? It was Lyubcho's soldier friend. He didn't just tell Lyubcho about Jesus once. He shared about Jesus at every opportunity.

And Pastor Lyubcho didn't give up when he couldn't find a place to worship. He began worshiping in his home and inviting others to come. It wasn't just once, but week after week.

You have probably heard about Jesus more than once. Who tells you about Jesus – your parents, your pastor, your teacher at church, maybe a friend?



Let's do a little activity:

(Make up a simple clapping pattern the children can easily repeat. Demonstrate the clapping pattern, and then ask one student to join you. Now add a third person and then a fourth and fifth person. Continue adding children until you have everyone clapping.)

What happened as we clapped? Did you learn the pattern better? Did the sound get louder as more and more people joined?

God knows that sometimes we need to hear things more than once before we take action. In the Bible, He sometimes gives us instruction over and over in different ways.

Let's reread our theme verse:

Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples.

— Psalms 96:1-3

Now let's read something Jesus said to His disciples: "And he said unto them, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15).

Both of these verses tell us that God wants us to proclaim the good news of Jesus to the nations – to every creature.

Sometimes we must have something repeated over and over before we really listen and understand. Sometimes, the instruction has to get "loud" enough for us to hear. Are we listening? Have we heard God's instruction? Are we ready to obey like Pastor Lyubcho and his soldier friend – to keep sharing the good news "day after day"? Are we ready to tell our friends about Jesus?



Meet Chance and Dee Dee Galloway



Chance and Dee Dee Galloway lived in Columbus, GA, before answering the Lord's call to Kyustendil, Bulgaria. They began serving in Bulgaria in 2011. Their primary ministry objective is to encourage, empower, teach and train national leaders. The Galloways continue to work with church-planting initiatives throughout Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Serbia, with 46 churches planted since 2015. Other involvements include agricultural projects that teach farming techniques and provide food for the poor and elderly; leadership in establishing the St. John's Home, a safe house for those at risk for human trafficking; and a discipleship school. Loving God, loving others and making disciples is the primary mission of their ministry. Dee Dee serves the Europe area Ministry Resource Team as coordinator of the Love-Driven Justice Team. The Galloways have four young-adult children, two daughters-in-law and one grandchild living in the U.S.

Children: Mitchell, Catherine, Jessie, Alan

Contact the Galloways: gallowaysinbulgaria@gmail.com

Pray for the Galloways:

- Pray for the Galloways' continued growth in the Lord as they seek to lead others.
- Pray that all the pastors and leaders in Bulgaria will be united in mind, heart and purpose.
- Pray for the agricultural projects and fruitful harvests to support the Roma communities they serve.
- Pray for training events that help pastors and leaders grow and learn how to lead others in following Jesus.
- Pray for the St. John's Home for girls. Ask the Father to give hope and healing to the girls they serve.
- Pray for the spiritual health and encouragement of the Galloways' children.

Prayer cards for the Galloways are available from Free Methodist World Missions. If you would like some for your students, please contact janet.coates@fmcusa.org.



ADVENTURE IN PRAYER

NEW LIFE – PRAYER TREE

Preparation: Gather several large twigs, tie them together, and put them in a tin can, jar or vase. Gather colorful strips of fabric or colored ribbon long enough to tie around one of the twigs.

Talk with your students about new life in the spring. Think of the trees that look dead in the winter because they have no leaves. In the spring, they come alive, some with beautiful blooms before the green leaves emerge. Pastor Lyubcho, in our story, found new life in Jesus. He went from being depressed and wishing he wasn't alive to having joy and peace in his life. It was like he was a new person.

Read these verses:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:[a] The old has gone, the new is here" (2 Corinthians 5:17)!

"He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true'" (Revelation 21:5).

"Sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things; his right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him" (Psalms 98:1).

Invite children to tie a colored ribbon on one of the twigs and pray for one of these things. Adults may assist them as needed.

- If they have never invited Jesus to forgive them, this is a great time to ask Jesus to make their heart new.
- If a friend or family member needs Jesus to make them new, they can tie a ribbon on the tree and pray for them.
- If they know someone struggling because they are discouraged or lonely and need their mind to be made new, they can pray for them.
- If they are just thankful for the great things God has done and how God makes all things new, they can pray a prayer of thanks.





EXPLORE THE CULTURE

LANGUAGE

Practice saying these words in Bulgarian.

Моля	Molya	Please
Няма защо	Nyama zashto	You're welcome
Благодаря	Blagodarya	Thank you
Не	Ne	No
Да	Da	Yes



One of the fun facts was that Bulgarians shake their heads for “yes” and nod for “no.” Play a game going back and forth, quickly saying yes or no in Bulgarian. Students must move their heads in the proper direction, as if they were in Bulgaria. If they make the wrong movement, they are out. Do this until only one person is left. *(You may want to purchase a small treat for the one who is left.)*

Source: bulgarianpod101.com/key-bulgarian-phrases

Bulgaria uses what is known as the Cyrillic alphabet. For an added activity, have children write their first name using this Cyrillic alphabet.

Аа a (as in army)

Бб b (as in bath)

Вв v (as in very)

Гг g (as in good)

Дд d (as in dog)

Ее e (as in egg)

Жж zh (like the “s” in leisure)

Зз z (as in zoo)

Ии i (as in bit)

Йй y (as in youth)

Кк k (as in kick)

Лл l (as in love)

Мм m (as in meet)

Нн n (as in no)

Оо o (as in hot)

Пп p (as in pot)

Рр r (as in red)

Сс s (as in set)

Тт t (as in tree)

Уу oo (as in room)

Фф f (as in fish)

Хх h (as in hat)

Цц tz (as in quartz)

Чч ch (as in church)

Шш sh (as in shut)

Щщ sht (as in pushed)

Ъъ u (as in ugly)

Ьь (consonant-softening sound)

Юю yu (as in you)

Яя ya (as in yarn)

Sources: freesofiatour.com/blog/may-24th-slavonic-literature-culture-day, mylanguages.org/

GAMES

Dodgeball

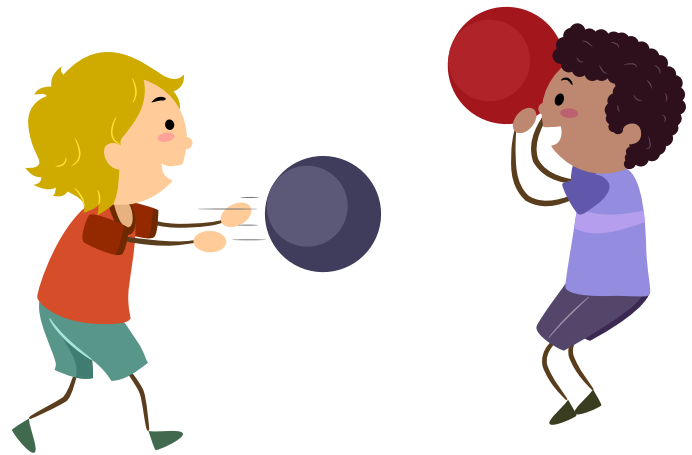
Children in Bulgaria have their own form of dodgeball. This is our version.

What you need:

- any number of students
- an odd number of balls (at least five)
- something to mark off baselines (chalk, tape, etc.)

How to Play:

- Mark off two baselines on the pavement or floor.
- Gather an odd number of balls for the game, at least five.
- Divide students into two teams.
- Line the balls up between the two baselines.
- Each team stands behind their baseline until you blow a whistle or yell, "Go."
- All the students run for a ball but cannot throw it until they return to their baseline.
- If a player throws a ball and strikes a player on the opposing team, the player hit by the ball is out.
- If the player catches the ball, the person who threw the ball is out.



- There are no headshots. If a ball strikes a student in the head, the one throwing the ball is out of the game.
- When all the players from one team are eliminated, the game is over; the team with players remaining wins.

Chained Words (Bulgaria)

This game has many names and is played in several countries.

How to play:

- Have students sit in a circle.
- Choose a category for the word chain (for example, food).
- Choose one student to begin the chain by saying a word in the chosen category.
- The next child in the circle must name a word in the category that begins with the last letter from the previous word. (For example, if the first word was "pea," the second player could say "apple").
- Establish a time limit for the children to give their word (five to 10 seconds).
- Proceed around the circle until someone is stuck and does not name a word in the allotted time.



- Choose another category and play again, as many rounds as you wish.
- Make the game a little more difficult for older children by requiring the second and preceding words to begin with the last two letters of the word given.

(Example: If the first word is apple, the second player could say lettuce.)

- Potential categories: boy names, food, girl names, jobs, places or animals.

You may wish to separate younger and older children for this game and give the younger children a longer time limit for choosing their words.

CRAFT

Easter Eggs - Bulgaria

Many Eastern European countries, including Bulgaria, decorate ornate Easter eggs. Sometimes colors and symbols painted on the eggs have specific meanings. Some use wax writing to decorate the eggs. Some use paint or other elaborate decorations. In Bulgaria, they paint hard-boiled eggs on Maundy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter. The first egg is always painted red as a symbol of the blood of Christ. We will not use hard-boiled eggs for this project, but you may want to use red and other bright colors for decorating.



Supplies:

- glue
- cotton swabs
- foam, plastic, wooden or paper mâché eggs
- sequins
- stickers
- various ribbons, cut into 12-inch pieces for each egg
- rick-rack
- straight pins
- paints

Directions:

Use one egg for each student. If they use plastic eggs, students will need to use glue to apply sequins and ribbons, or they may use stickers to decorate. With wooden or paper mâché eggs, students may use paint to color the eggs. Use one color to paint a base coat. After this coat of paint is dried children may wish to paint designs. They may also use glue to apply ribbons and sequins or decorate with stickers. For foam eggs, students can use glue or small pins to apply decorations.





FOOD

Simple Snack:

Bulgarians love yogurt. They have a special kind of yogurt that is smooth, creamy and a bit tart. For a simple snack, serve small containers of yogurt along with a variety of fruits (apples, grapes, cherries, etc.) and nuts (walnuts or almonds). *Please be aware of any nut allergies among your students.*

Honey Cookies

These cookies are called *Medenki*. Serve these cookies with a glass of milk.

Ingredients:

1 large egg	1/8 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup sifted powdered sugar	1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 cup honey	1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract	1/2 cup of melted semi-sweet chocolate chips
1/3 cup oil	1 teaspoon of oil
2 cups all-purpose flour	



Directions:

Combine the flour, salt, cinnamon and baking soda in a bowl. In a separate bowl, beat eggs and powdered sugar for about 3 minutes, adding the vanilla and honey at the end. After these are mixed together, add in the oil. After mixing in the oil, add half the dry ingredients and mix. Then add the remaining ingredients and beat until all the dry ingredients are mixed in. Let the dough set for 5-10 minutes. Use greased or parchment-lined baking sheets. Shape cookies into balls using about 2 tablespoons of the dough at a time. Bake at 350 degrees for 12-13 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned.

Mix 1/2 cup of melted semi-sweet chocolate chips with 1 teaspoon of oil. After the cookies are cool, dip half of each cookie in chocolate.

This recipe makes about 15 cookies.

Source: cooking4sl.com/bulgarian-honey-cookies-medenki-recipe/

FLAG, MAP AND PUZZLES

Bulgarian Flag



The flag of Bulgaria has three equal horizontal stripes – white at the top, green in the middle and red at the bottom. White represents peace. The green represents Bulgaria’s agricultural wealth, and the red is symbolic of bravery.

Bulgaria Map

Use a pencil, pen or marker to add Sofia (the capital city), the Danube River, Rila Mountains, Pirin Mountains and Mount Musala. Draw pictures of animals found in Bulgaria (pink pelican, wild swan, deer, mountain goat, boar, bear and pheasant). Add other things that represent the country, like a rose.



All About Bulgaria



1. The capital of Bulgaria is _ _ _ _ _ .
2. Bulgarians love to eat _ _ _ _ _ at every meal.
3. The middle stripe of the Bulgarian flag is _ _ _ _ _ ,
4. Chance and Dee Dee _ _ _ _ _ are missionaries.
5. The national moto is _ _ _ _ _ Makes Strength.
6. The money in Bulgaria is called _ _ _ .
7. Most Bulgarian families have a vegetable _ _ _ _ _ .
8. Gaida is the Bulgarian word for _ _ _ _ _ .
9. Bulgarians _ _ _ _ more than they watch television.
10. The _ _ _ _ is the national flower.
11. People nod the their head to say _ _ .
12. Pastor Lyubcho serves among the _ _ _ _ people.

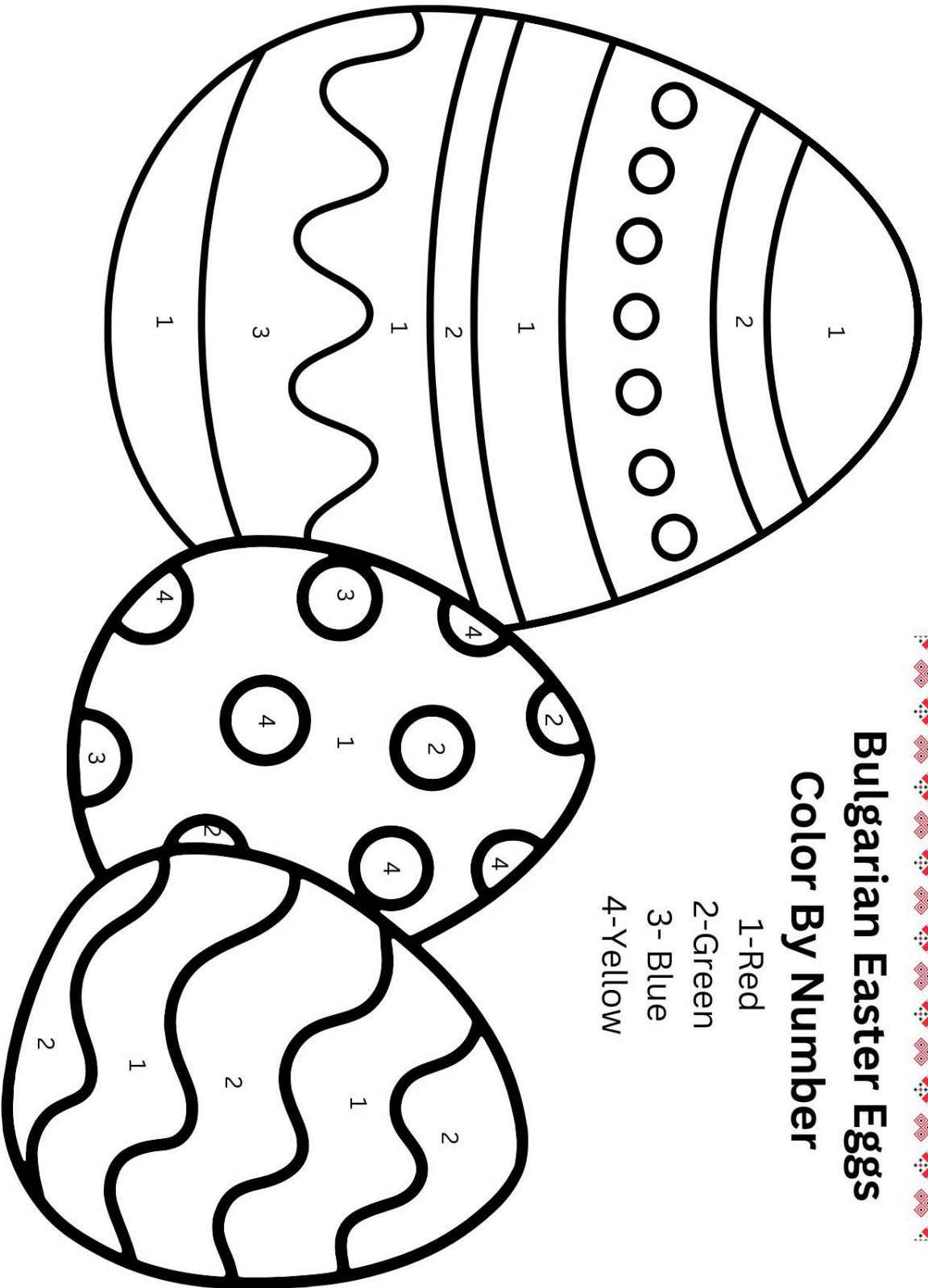




Bulgarian Easter Eggs

Color By Number

- 1-Red
- 2-Green
- 3-Blue
- 4-Yellow





Capital city: Sofia
 Main language: Bulgarian
 Religion: Bulgarian Orthodox

Did you know?



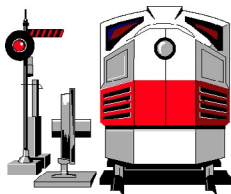
The colors on Bulgaria's flag symbolize

peace (white) and bravery (red).



Yogurt is eaten at nearly every meal.

Bulgaria's national flower is the rose.

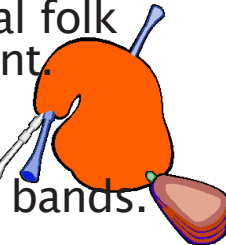


Many people travel by train - this

type of transportation is cheap and reliable.

Bag pipes are a traditional folk instrument.

Bulgaria even has bag pipe bands.



People read more than they watch television.



By age 9 children are learning at least one foreign language in school.

TO DO:

Use the answer graph to complete the scripture verse below. You might not use all the letters.

ANSWER GRAPH

	5	6	7	8
1	A	G	C	L
2	E	T	O	F
3	D	S	H	R
4	I	U	Q	V

1,6 2,7 3,5 1,8 2,7 4,8 2,5 3,6

1,5 1,7 3,7 2,5 2,5 3,8 2,8 4,6 1,8

1,6 4,5 4,8 2,5 3,8

P Pray for programs that train
r leaders and expand youth
a ministries.

Bulgaria



f Pray for an large harvest from
o the Pure Farm providing food for
r many people.

Answer (hold up to a mirror):

God loves a cheerful giver. 5

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Puzzle Answer:



1. The capital of Bulgaria is Sofia.
2. Bulgarians love to eat yogurt at every meal.
3. The middle stripe of the Bulgarian flag is green.
4. Chance and Dee Dee Galloway are missionaries.
5. The national moto is Unity Makes Strength.
6. The money in Bulgaria is called lev.
7. Most Bulgarian families have a vegetable garden.
8. Gaida is the Bulgarian word for bagpipe.
9. Bulgarians read more than they watch television.
10. The rose is the national flower.
11. People nod their head to say no.
12. Pastor Lyubcho serves among the Roma people.

