

AMP 3-20-16 | 9:00 - 9:30am

Today's Service

- That God would draw unsaved people to our service and into his kingdom. Pray especially for those that reached by Robert's tract ministry.
- That Pastor Jon would teach and preach in God's power as he preaches a series on Easter.
- That God's presence would be palpable and that all in attendance would be changed by the godness, power, and love of God.

RPC Outreach

- That we the people of RPC would desire to be a word and deed church.
- That God would open up great and lasting opportunities of community service for RPC.
- That God would build the community of RPC: prayer meetings, membership classes, bible studies, etc.

Regional Church

- Pray for the other churches of our presbytery: Westminster Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Jonathan Holst (Hamden, CT); Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Bohemia, Meindert Ploegman (Bohemia, NY); Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Franklin Square, William Shishko (Franklin Square, NY), Trinity Church, Ben Miller (Syosset, NY), Westchester Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Dan Osborne (Mt. Vernon, NY).

Bulgaria | Basic Country Facts:

Operation World Denomination Statistics



Christians	Deno ms	Pop %	Affiliates	Ann Gr
Protestant	29	1.70	127,000	0.7%
Independent	15	0.58	44,000	2.5%
Catholic	1	0.99	74,000	0.0%
Orthodox	4	78.56	5,890,000	-0.7%
Marginal	4	0.15	11,000	4.7%
Doubly Affiliated		-2.07	-156,000	0.0%

Ethnic Breakdown: Bulgarian 76.9%, Turkish 8%, Roma 4.4%, other 0.7% (including Russian, Armenian, and Vlach), other (unknown) 10% (2011 est.)

Major Languages: Bulgarian (official) 76.8%, Turkish 8.2%, Roma 3.8%, other 0.7%, unspecified 10.5% (2011 est.)

Religion: Eastern Orthodox 59.4%, Muslim 7.8%, other (including Catholic, Protestant, Armenian Apostolic Orthodox, and Jewish) 1.7%, none 3.7%, unspecified 27.4% (2011 est.)

Population: 7,186,893 (July 2015 est.)

Life Expectancy: male: 71.05 years female: 77.93 years (2015 est.)

Government: parliamentary democracy

Economic Conditions: Bulgaria, a former Communist country that entered the EU on 1 January 2007, averaged more than 6% annual growth from 2004 to 2008, driven by significant amounts of bank lending, consumption, and foreign direct investment.

Successive governments have demonstrated a commitment to economic reforms and responsible fiscal planning, but the global downturn sharply reduced domestic demand, exports, capital inflows, and industrial production. GDP contracted by 5.5% in 2009, and has been slow to recover in the years since.

Despite having a favorable investment regime, including low, flat corporate income taxes, significant challenges remain. Corruption in public administration, a weak judiciary, and the presence of organized crime continue to hamper the country's investment climate and economic prospects.

GDP Per Capita: \$18,400 (2015 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin: agriculture: 5.2% industry: 27.4% services: 67.4% (2015 est.)

AMP 3-20-16 | 9:00 - 9:30am

Education: Government estimates from 2003 put the literacy rate at 98.6 per cent, with no significant difference between the sexes. Educational standards have been traditionally high, although still far from European benchmarks and in continuing deterioration for the past decade. Bulgarian students were among the highest-scoring in the world in terms of reading in 2001, performing better than their Canadian and German counterparts; by 2006, scores in reading, math and science had deteriorated. State expenditures for education are far below the European Union average. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Science partially funds public schools, colleges and universities, sets criteria for textbooks and oversees the publishing process. The State provides free education in primary and secondary public schools. The educational process spans through 12 grades, where grades one through eight are primary and nine through twelve are secondary level. High schools can be technical, vocational, general or specialised in a certain discipline, while higher education consists of a 4-year bachelor degree and a 1-year master's degree. (wiki)

Religion: The Constitution of Bulgaria defines it as a secular state with guaranteed religious freedom, but designates Orthodoxy as a "traditional" religion. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church gained autocephalous status in 927 AD, and currently has 12 dioceses and over 2,000 priests. More than three-quarters of Bulgarians subscribe to Eastern Orthodoxy. Sunni Muslims are the second-largest community and constitute 10 per cent of the religious makeup, although a majority of them do not pray and find the use of Islamic veils in schools unacceptable. Less than three per cent are affiliated with other religions, 11.8 per cent do not self-identify with a religion and 21.8 per cent refused to state their beliefs. (wiki)

Prayer Points:

- Bulgaria's transformation from harsh spiritual repressiveness in the 1980s to relative openness and freedom today. Evangelicals face periodic opposition at the local level, but Bulgaria's move towards EU membership had an opening effect in the religious sphere also. There is a definite sense of progress in inter-church relations, though further progress is needed. (OW Answers to Prayer 1)
- Bulgaria's troubled past is not yet completely behind. Corruption and powerful organized crime syndicates persist. Poverty is widespread, as are divorce and abortion – there are more abortions than live births. Many of the youngest and brightest emigrate seeking jobs and money. Pray that wholeness will come to this nation as only the transforming gospel can bring. (OW 1)
- The Orthodox Church needs renewal and new life. A bitter schism weakened and undermined the Church, stemming from the collusion of Orthodox leaders with the former Communist regime. Disunity persists, even at the local level. Orthodoxy is still largely equated to a Bulgarian identity, but this is changing as other religious groups take root and grow. Pray for a genuine move of the Holy Spirit that brings reconciliation of rifts and a full realization of Orthodoxy's spiritual richness. (OW 2)
- Evangelicals have grown, matured and unified in response to challenges and opposition of the past two decades. Pray for:
 - b) The Bulgarian body of Christ is capable of making an immense positive impact on this country where racial tensions abound and where hope for the future is rare. True unity amongst believers of different ethnic and denominational backgrounds could be a powerful testimony.
 - c) Sofia, the capital and Bulgaria's only large city, has many churches, but more are needed. Pray for the nation's centre of influence to be saturated with the gospel. Meanwhile, 2,500 villages are without any evangelical church. Pray that the peoples of the rural areas would not be neglected; their spiritual need is great. (OW 3b,c)
- Islam's legacy here dates to the Ottoman era, but most Bulgarian Muslims practice folk magic and are largely unaware of many Islamic teachings. Muslim missionaries (who outnumber Christian ones), teachers and funds pour into the country to teach Bulgarian Muslims a purer Islam and to push for greater Islamic influence. Pray that Bulgaria's 900,000 Muslims would discover Jesus as the true light and Lamb of God. (OW 6)
- Christian media ministries. Difficult conditions for evangelism in the 1990s invited a more creative and savvy approach. Bulgaria's use of media for spreading the gospel is praiseworthy. From tracts to glossy magazines to Internet and television, it is estimated most Bulgarians are exposed to the gospel through mass media. The same media further serves the Church by keeping it informed of both domestic and international issues, with the Internet in particular increasing resource availability (sermons, music, articles, etc). (OW 10)