



Dear Praying Friends in Europe!

Bulgaria Perspectives

Following the Canopy letter in November, giving a perspective from Lithuania, we are starting the new year with a viewpoint from Bulgaria. At our prayer gathering in Warsaw in October, I asked Daniela, Andon & Denka and Daniel & Angelina a few questions about their nation. But first a brief introduction to the country...

Introduction to Bulgaria

Bulgaria is a major country in southeast Europe, with the Danube river to its north and the Black Sea to the east. Its capital is Sofia and other major cities are Burgas, Plovdiv and Varna. The population is about 6.5 million, but has been steadily declining since 1986 and is also ageing. About 85% are ethnic Bulgarians, 9% Turks and 5% Roma. Abortion, while less than in the past, is still widespread, and divorce is common. Many young people leave Bulgaria (one of the poorest EU countries) to find work in other nations.

Bulgaria suffered under Communist rule from 1947 to 1989 and, although it has been a parliamentary democracy since 1990, troubles remain. Corruption, crime networks, and poverty affect many lives. Recent governments have been unstable and it currently has an interim government with new elections scheduled for early 2026.

It is a member of the European Union and NATO and has just joined the Eurozone on 1st January 2026. About 63% of Bulgarians are Orthodox Christians and 2–10% are estimated to be Evangelical. Among these are many faithful, praying people, such as our friends today...

Which countries are Bulgaria's closest friends?

Andon says, "I would say that one of the closest friends of Bulgaria, that we cherish, is Israel." Daniel added, "Just recently our President confirmed this friendship and said he would not recognise Gaza as an independent country." The relationship with its northern neighbour Romania is of course very important, as is the relationship with Germany. In addition, Bulgaria tries to keep a good relationship with its neighbour to the south-east, Turkey, and recently Turkey opened the border so that Bulgarian citizens can travel there freely with just their ID cards. Our friends have used this opportunity to do mission trips there and in the last year and a half, they have distributed around 1000 New Testaments in Turkey.

What are you most proud of about Bulgaria?

From Daniela – One thing that Bulgaria is very proud of is the production of rose oil, which is used in the cosmetic industry in France and Italy. It is also one of the oldest countries in Europe, founded in 681 AD, and has kept the name Bulgaria for all that time. The Cyrillic alphabet was developed in Bulgaria by disciples of the Byzantine monks Cyril and Methodius. Daniel adds that around 250 million people in the world use this alphabet. Andon – We are also proud that Christianity came to us quite early, around the year 800. Denka wants you to know that they have a beautiful Black Sea coast, that many people enjoy. Please come and visit! Lastly, from Daniel – Bulgaria is the third European nation to send a person into space!

What is your biggest worry or concern for the future?

Andon and Daniel are both concerned that Bulgaria will not participate in the war in Ukraine, that their politicians will be careful and not take steps that lead towards joining in the war. Denka is concerned that Islam is very much spreading in the Balkans and hopes it will be held back from their country.

They have all been watching what is going on in Western nations and churches with moves away from Biblical values, and are concerned that this will not also be forced on Bulgaria. Their desire is that the churches will not compromise with the Word of God, because then they would lose their strength and power.



What is your biggest prayer for Bulgaria and the other Balkan countries?

Daniela - I would say, one of the biggest prayers is to see the Kingdom of God spread in the Balkans, as it has faced many obstacles in the past, with lots of animosity and war between nations.

Denka - My prayer is for the Balkans to be united and for hatred to be replaced by peace and that all the unreached villages and towns will be reached for the Gospel.

Andon - Since 865, when Christianity came to Bulgaria, we have called ourselves a Christian nation, but this is not the truth, so my prayer is that we will not just be known as Christians by name but also by heart. That the Lord will continue to be the centre of everything in Bulgaria and the Balkans, and will give us the strength and faith to go through all these difficulties.

Daniel - That Bulgaria will wake up, the church be revived, and the people be awakened as Christians to learn to hear the voice of God.

Is there anything you would like to say to the Christians in the rest of Europe?

Denka encourages us to be strong and courageous, to stand firm in all circumstances and battles.

Andon says, "May they know that we are praying for them, and the Lord is going to fulfil His promises.

To hold on to the Word of God and not to compromise the faith."

Daniela wants the Christians of Europe to stand firm against all worldly movements.

Daniel - To continue to be hospitable to the refugees from Ukraine, to comfort and bless them. Also, as the Bible says, do not stop praying for Israel, for the peace of Jerusalem. As the Apostle Paul said, we are grafted into the olive tree, so we have this obligation to pray and support Israel.

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the church in Bulgaria to be united, holy, and to demonstrate God's love to the country,
2. For corruption to reduce, for wisdom for the interim government, the switch to the Euro to go smoothly and for a stable government to be elected that governs according to God's values and for the good of the people,
3. That Russia's war in Ukraine will not lead to Bulgaria and other countries being drawn in to the fighting,
4. That as Christians in Europe, we will all stand firm in our Biblical and Holy Spirit-led faith and for the Kingdom of God to continue to grow in Bulgaria and all Balkan countries!



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