



ANCIENT GREEKS IN THE LAND OF DIONYSOS: EXCAVATION EMPORION PISTIROS, BULGARIA

Course ID: ARCH 365R

July 21–August 18, 2024

Academic Credits: 8 Semester Credit Units

FIELD SCHOOL DIRECTOR(S)

Dr. Angela Pencheva, Visiting professor at the Department of Archaeology and Center for Vocational and Continuing Education, New Bulgarian University, Sofia; Balkan Heritage Program Director (angelapbh@gmail.com)

Dig Directors:

Ass. Prof. Dr. Alexey Gotsev, National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Ass. Prof. Dr. Emil Nankov, National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences



OVERVIEW

Up to the present day the site of Pistiros (located near the modern Bulgarian town of Septemvri) remains the only one identified example for Greek emporion (trade center) in the heart of Thrace. It presents important evidence not only for intensive trade, but also for the coexistence of the Greek and Thracian cultures in the late Classical and early Hellenistic age.

In 1988, Prof. M. Domaradzki first recorded the ruins of an ancient Greek emporion, located on the left bank of the Maritsa River (the ancient Hebros River) between the towns of Vetren and Septemvri in the Thracian valley. Excavations began at the site in 1990, when the team found a stone inscription (known as the "Vetren inscription") that identified the site as the Ancient Greek emporion Pistiros.

Pistiros thrived between the 5th and 3rd century BCE when merchants from the Greek coastal cities of Maroneia, Thasos, and Apollonia lived there and traded with the local Thracians. These trade relations were sanctioned by the authority of the Odrysian kings, who ruled the wealthiest and most influential Thracian kingdom at that time.

Many items were traded at the emporion, but it is best known as a major metallurgical center. Pistiros harbor was used to export both metal ore and finished metal products from Thrace to Greece. Artifacts of diverse origins attest to the international network feeding Pistiros and include Attic red-figure and black-gloss pottery, amphorae, and coins of Greek Poleis and different Odrysian kings.

History of Research

Annual excavations at Pistiros have taken place for 33 years. Over these years the eastern fortification wall was cleared, revealing a gate, towers, and a bastion. Streets were uncovered, paved with large stone plates. Buildings were excavated, revealing solid stone foundations. These were accompanied with an efficient drainage system that drained the entire site. A site museum was recently created, and most finds are processed, stored and displayed there.

Since 2013 the students of BHFS field school called "Ancient Greeks in the Land of Dionysos" have been actively participating in the excavations. The course is a cooperative effort between Balkan Heritage Foundation (BHF), the Archaeological Museum "Prof. M. Domaradzki", Septemvri, Bulgaria, the Pistiros Excavation Team from the National Institute of Archaeology and Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the Institute for Field Research.

Current archaeological research aims to address three significant questions. First, how did the many ethnic groups (Greeks, Thracians and Celts) interact and what was the nature of their co-existence? Second, what were the ancient geographical routes of the trade at Pistiros and what was the nature of the local production of metal and pottery at the site? Third, what are the characteristics of the different building phases at the site?

The goal for the 2024 season is to continue the excavations of:

- The southeastern sector of the site, next to the fortification wall where two chronological phases of the existence of the settlement have been identified: 1) dug in houses with mud brick walls, dated from the end of 5th to the beginning of the 4th BCE; and 2) buildings with different construction, dated from the end of 4th to the beginning of the 3rd BCE. Our goal is to gather more information about this area's function and chronology so we may better address our research questions.
- The northwestern part of the site which was excavated for the first time in 2023. The goal is to trace the remains of the fortification wall in a NW direction and uncover any additional structures both inside and outside the fortified area.

ACADEMIC CREDIT UNITS & TRANSCRIPTS

Credit Units: Attending students will be awarded 8 semester credit units (equivalent to 12 quarter credit units) through our academic partner, Connecticut College. Connecticut College is a highly ranked liberal arts institution with a deep commitment to undergraduate education. Students will receive a letter grade for attending this field school (see assessment, below). This field school provides a minimum of 360 hours of experiential education. Students are encouraged to discuss the transferability of credit units with faculty and registrars at their home institution prior to attending this field school.

Transcripts: An official copy of transcripts will be mailed to the permanent address listed by students on their online application. One more transcript may be sent to the student's home institution at no cost. Additional transcripts may be ordered at any time through the [National Student Clearinghouse](#).

PREREQUISITES

None. This is hands-on, experiential learning and students will study on-site how to conduct archaeological research. Archaeology involves physical work and exposure to the elements and thus requires a measure of understanding that this will not be the typical university learning environment. You will have to work outdoors and will get sweaty and tired. Students are required to come equipped with sufficient excitement and adequate understanding that archaeology requires real, hard work, in the sun and wind, on your feet, and with your trowel. The work requires patience, discipline, and attention to detail.

Pistiros Excavation Project will host students and professionals of archaeology from all over the world. With such an international team it is vital that all students respect the IFR code of conduct, each other's cultures, local organizational, social, and cultural rules and laws.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course has a balanced structure combining lectures and field work. The practical portion of the field school is focused on excavation techniques, field documentation practices and finds processing. During the lectures, students are introduced to the history and archaeology of Thrace in the Classical and Hellenistic age covering different aspects, such as: architecture, burial practices, epigraphy, metallurgy etc.

1. To prepare students to perform basic excavation tasks: the use of tools, digging techniques, sieving, scraping, etc.
2. To prepare students to perform basic field documentation tasks: the use of measuring and documentation tools and devices, creating written (context sheets, field journals, finds labels, etc.), photo, and graphic documentation (drawing of stratigraphical situations, architectural structures, contexts, etc.).
3. To introduce students to basic finds processing procedures: cleaning, selecting and arranging archaeological finds, technical pottery drawing, the organization of finds storage, etc.
4. To introduce students to contemporary 3D recording techniques: Reflectance Transformation Imaging. (with focus on documentation of archaeological artifacts).
5. To introduce students to basic archaeological conservation and restoration techniques and procedures.

6. To introduce students to Thracian history and civilization as well as the range of materials and cultures of Thrace and the Mediterranean.
7. To introduce students to contemporary standards of work on an archaeological site.
8. To introduce students to the health and safety requirements at an archaeological site.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students participating in this field school will gain basic knowledge of excavation techniques, field documentation practices and finds processing, leaving them better prepared for any future archaeological fieldwork projects. They will have certain knowledge in the history and archaeology of Thrace in the Late Iron Age and basic training in RTI. During the outlined activities participants will learn skills transferable outside of excavations, such as analytical thinking, teamwork, the ability to meet deadlines and adapt to outside conditions, which will aid them when seeking employment in any work field.

ASSESSMENT

Students will be graded based on their work as follows.

% of Grade	Activity
20 %	Exam (test)
10 %	Excavating (use of tools, digging, scraping, brushing, cleaning, sieving, etc.)
20 %	Keeping a field journal and filling in context sheet and labels
10 %	Scale drawing (ground plan/ cross section/ specific archaeological structure or feature); Measuring and leveling
10%	Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)
10 %	Finds processing: washing and sorting, labeling and registration
10 %	Artifact drawing (pottery)
10 %	Presentation of the field work results

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The required minimum attendance for the successful completion of the field school is 85% of the course hours. Any significant tardy arrival or early departure from an activity will be calculated as an absence from the activity. An acceptable number of absences for which a medical or reasonable excuse is provided will not be taken into account if the student catches up on the field school study plan through additional readings or personal consultations and tutorials with program staff members.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All IFR field schools begin with a safety orientation. This orientation addresses local and program protocols concerning student behavior, appropriate attire, local practices and sensibilities that may be unfamiliar, potential fauna and flora hazards, IFR harassment and discrimination policies, and the student Code of Conduct.

The Field School schedule consists of four modules:

MODULE I - Theoretical module. Consists of three components (30 hours)

1. Lectures and instructions about field methods and practices.
2. Lectures about different aspects of the history and archaeology of Pistiros and the context of Thrace.
3. Lectures about the history and archaeology of the Balkans, Bulgaria and visited sites.

MODULE II – Practicum. Consists of three components (145 hours)

1. Field work, including the basic practices of excavation and archaeological records (110 hours).
2. Workshops dedicated to primary archaeological finds processing and documentation (15 hours).
3. Workshops for RTI: For interested students a one-week series of workshops will be available that will introduce students to new, computational photographic techniques at the Septemvri Museum. The workshops will concentrate on using these new techniques to reveal features that are difficult or impossible to see with the naked eye on finds in the collection, mainly excavated from Pistiros. This workshop will be of interest to students interested in archaeological excavation, conservation, and museology. (20 hours).

MODULE III - Excursions accompanied by lectures, presentations, and behind-the-scenes visits to sites of historical/archaeological significance (approx. 15 hours), such as the ancient city of Plovdiv (Roman Theatre, the Roman Stadium, the archaeological museum, the Small Basilica, etc.), the Late Classical and Hellenistic Thracian tombs in the Valley of the Thracian kings (tombs of Kazanlak, Golyamata Kosmatka, Ostrusha), the Archaeological Museum of Kazanlak, and the Archaeological, Historical and Ethnographic museum of Panagyurishte.

MODULE IV – Homework (approx. 10 hours) will be assigned to all students, which will consist of editing and processing students’ field documentation (field journal, context sheets, drawings, photos, etc.) and preparing presentations and reports.

Date	Morning	Afternoon
Day 1	Arrive by noon at Sofia Airport in Sofia, Bulgaria. Students will be picked up from the airport by a shuttle to Villa Velis , Karabunar, Pazardzhik district, Bulgaria	Arrival in the hotel & welcome dinner
Day 2	Presentation of the Balkan Heritage Field School and collaborative universities & institutions, the project and the participants. Ice-breakers.	Sightseeing of Pistiros and the Septemvri Archaeological Museum "M. Domaradzki".
Day 3	Field work Instructions: Hygiene, health and safety at the site. Use of Tools and Working Techniques Basic Field Methods and Practices for Excavation and Documentation	Lecture: From the Field to Storage – review of basic methods for uncovering, “first aid”, consolidation in situ, cleaning, sorting out, labeling, documenting and storing of ceramic artifacts Lecture: Archaeological Documentation. Journal, Context Sheets, Tags.

Day 4	Field work	Lecture: Basic Timeline of the Thracian History
Day 5	Field work	Workshop: Typology of Pottery from Pistiros (Late Classical and Hellenistic Period)
Day 6	Field work	Lecture & Workshop: Pottery Drawing, Part I
Day 7	Excursion: Guided visit to Plovdiv (the ancient city of Philippopolis)	
Day 8	Field work	Workshop: Circulation of Ancient Coins in Pistiros
Day 9	Field work	Lecture: Urbanization of Ancient Thrace
Day 10	Field work	Lecture: Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 11	Field work	Lecture: Epigraphic Monuments and Artifacts from Pistiros
Day 12	Field work	Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 13	Excursion: Visit to the Archaeological, Historical, and Ethnological Complex of Panagyurishte	
Day 14	Day off	
Day 15	Field work	Lecture: Classical and Hellenistic Toreutic from Thrace
Day 16	Field work	Workshop: Pottery Conservation, Part I
Day 17	Field work	Workshop: Pottery Conservation, Part II
Day 18	Field work	Workshop: Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 19	Field work	Lecture: Thracian Burial Customs and Sepulchral Architecture (5 th -3 rd century BCE)
Day 20	Excursion: Thracian Tombs in the Kazanlak Region (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and Starosel	
Day 21	Day off	
Day 22	Field Work	Workshop: Introduction to Technical Photography

Day 23	Field Work	Workshop: Introduction to Reflectance Transformation Imaging (Capture)
Day 24	Field Work	Workshop: Introduction to Reflectance Transformation Imaging (Capture)
Day 25	Field Work	Exam Workshop: Workshop: Introduction to Reflectance Transformation Imaging (Processing)
Day 26	Field work	Workshop: Archaeological finds and field documentation processing
Day 27	Field work	Preparation of the Presentations of the Excavation's results
Day 28	- Presentation of the Excavation's results. Evaluation meeting and Conclusion	- Dinner and farewell party
Day 29	Departure	

Course structure may be subject to change upon directors' discretion.

A typical workday

6:00-6:30	- Breakfast
6:40-7:00	- Travel to the site
7:00-13:15	- Field-training at the excavation site
13:00-13:20	- Travel back to the hotel
13:30-17:00	- Lunch and siesta
	- Lectures and workshops
17:00-19:00	- Dinner
20:00-21:00	

In case of rainy days, lectures and lab work will be performed.

REQUIRED READINGS

PDF files of all mandatory readings will be provided to enrolled students. Students are encouraged to download and/or print readings prior to traveling. Course participants are expected to be prepared to engage the discussions led by facilitators, all of whom will be looking for compelling evidence that students have read and thought about the assigned readings prior to the scheduled day on which they are first discussed.

Archibald, Z. H. – *The Odrysian Kingdom of Thrace: Orpheus Unmasked* (Oxford, 1998), p. 151-213

Archibald, Z. – *Attic figured pottery from Adzijska Vodenitsa (Adzijska Vodenica)*, Vetreten 1989-95. – In: Pistiros II, Prague, 2002, 131-148

Bouzek, J. – *The outline of the chronology of Pistiros*. – Studia Hercynia XVII/1, Pistiros V supplementum, Praga, 2013, 5-7

Grant J., S. Gorin and N. Fleming. *The Archaeology Coursebook: an introduction to themes, sites, methods and skills*. Routledge. 2008 p. 25-51; 81 – 192; 93-100; 114 – 119; 277 -281

Roisman J., Worthington I., *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia* (Wiley – Blackwell, 2010): p. 392 - 409
Valeva J., Nankov J., Graninger D., *A Companion to Ancient Thrace* (Wiley – Blackwell, 2015); p. 3-75; 109-136; 158-197; 229-243; 295 – 383;

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Bouzek, J., M. Domaradzki, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros I. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 1996).
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros II. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2002).
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros III. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2007).
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros IV. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2010).
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, Z. Archibald (eds.) - *Pistiros V. Excavations and Studies* (Prague, 2014).
Bouzek, J., Militky J. (eds.) - *Pistiros VI. Pistiros Hoard* (Prague, 2016)
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka. - *Greeks in Inner Thrace*. *Eirene XLVII/2011/I – II*, Prague 2012, 45 – 60.
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka - *The Emporion Pistiros near Vetren Between Greater Powers, 450 – 278 BC* - In: *Thrace in the Graeco-Roman World*, Athens 2008, 86 – 94.
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, L. - *Pistiros and Inland Emporia in the Balkans: Greeks, Thracians, and their Neighbours*. – *Eirene XLVI/2010/I – II*, Prague 2010, 157 – 160.
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka - *Pistiros and the North Aegean Greek Cities* – In: *Ancient Macedonia. Proceedings of the 7th International Symposium on Ancient Macedonia*. Thessaloniki 2007, 2009, 745 – 758.
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka (eds.) - *The Culture of Thracians and their Neighbours. Proceedings of the International Symposium in Memory of Prof. Mieczysław Domaradzki, with a Round Table 'Archaeological map of Bulgaria'*, BAR International Series 1350 (Oxford, 2005).
Bouzek, J., M. Domaradzki†, L. Domaradzka, V. Taneva - *Fortification and Urban Planning of the Emporion Pistiros (Adžijska Vodenica)*, *Archeologia* (Warszawa) LII 2001, Warszawa 2002, 7 – 18.
Bouzek, J., L. Domaradzka, A. Gotzev, E. Ivanova, D. Katincharova, V. Kolarova, G. Lazov, V. Taneva, Y. Youroukova - *Pistiros and the Celts* - In: *Proceedings of the 3rd International Congress on Black Sea Antiquities*, *Eirene* 42, Prague 2006, 124 – 129.
Bouzek, J. and J. Musil. - *The Southern House: the last phases and notes on the earlier situation*. – *Pistiros IV, Excavations and Studies*, Prague, 2010, 24-41.
Burke, H., C. Smith - *The Archaeologist's Field Handbook* (Allen & Unwin, 2004)
Domaradzka, L. - *Catalogue of graffiti discovered during the excavations at Pistiros-Vetren 1988-1998*. Part one : graffiti on imported fine pottery. – *Pistiros II*, Prague, 2002, 209-228.
Domaradzki, M. - *Interim report on archaeological investigations at Vetren-Pistiros, 1988-1994*. – *Pistiros I*, *Excavations and Studies*, Prague, 1996, 13-34.
Drewett, P. L. - *Field Archaeology: An Introduction* (University College London, 1999)
Gotzev, A., Petrova, V. - *Archaeological investigations in squares B 23 and B'3 in 2012*, p. 191-194. In : *Pistiros V*, Prague.
Katincharova, D. - *Survey along the main street from the eastern gate of the emporion inwards and in the sector of the eastern city wall*, *Pistiros III*, Prague, 2007, 35-61
Lazov, G. - *Building 1 (fieldwork – 1989-2006) and Building 2 in the Emporion Pistiros, and the area NW of them*. – *Pistiros III*, *Excavations and Studies*, Prague, 2007, 20-34.
Valeva, J., Nankov, E., Graninger D. (ed.) *A Companion to Ancient Thrace*, Wiley Blackwell, 2015

PART II: TRAVEL, SAFETY & LOGISTICS

NOTICE OF INHERENT RISK

Traveling and conducting field research can involve risk. The IFR engages in intensive review of each field school location and programming prior to approval. Once a program is accepted, the IFR reviews each program annually to make sure it still complies with all our standards and policies, including those pertaining to student safety. Participants should also take every reasonable step to reduce risk while on IFR programs, including following the safety advice and guidelines of your program director, being alert to your surroundings and conditions, letting someone know where you will be at all times, and assessing your personal security.

The IFR does not provide trip or travel cancellation insurance. We strongly encourage participants to consider purchasing this insurance, as unexpected events may prevent your participation or cause the program to be canceled. Insurance is a relatively small cost to protect your educational investment in an IFR program. When comparing trip cancellation insurance policies, make sure the policy covers the cost of both airfare and tuition.

We do our best to follow a schedule of activities, methods training, and programming as outlined in this syllabus. However, this schedule can be easily disrupted by unforeseen circumstances, including weather, revisions by local permitting agencies, or conditions onsite. While this schedule represents the intentions of the program, adaptability is an intrinsic part of all field research, and necessary alterations to the schedule may happen at any time.

If you have any medical concerns, please consult with your doctor. For all other concerns, please consult with the program director and staff.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC FIELD CONDITIONS

Participation in the project is not recommended for individuals with solar allergies or other special illnesses that might be exacerbated during the intensive outdoor activities. The average summer temperatures in the area are 25-38° C (77 - 100° F) or higher. All participants should bring clothes and toiletries suitable for hot and sunny weather but should also prepare for possible rainy, windy and chilly days. Participants are also expected to prepare for the dig by reading at least the BHFS handbook that will be sent by email before the beginning of the project. Participants will use the tools and equipment available at the site and are not expected to bring any additional equipment.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

Citizens of EU, EEA, USA, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Australia and New Zealand do not need a visa to visit Bulgaria for up to 90 days. Citizens of all other countries may need a visa. The Balkan Heritage Foundation can send an official invitation letter that should be used at the relevant embassy to secure a visa to the program. For more information visit the Balkan Heritage Foundation web site at <http://www.bhfieldschool.org/information/visa-help> and the links provided there.

STUDENT HEALTH

An IFR field school is designed to provide safe, positive, and constructive experiences for participating communities, students, and researchers. We are committed to protocols and practices that support the health and well-being of all involved in our field school projects, including the members of the community in which these projects take place.

We recommend that students adopt best-practices for arriving in a good state of health to protect themselves and their peers' readiness to set about the work of the field school. A thriving field camp environment is a constant exchange of energy, patience, effort, respect, and service. Arriving healthy is every student's first act of service — their first opportunity to behave in a way that respects the safety and wellness of one another.

IFR programs follow the health requirements and guidelines of local health authorities. You may also wish to consult recommendations from the US Centers for Disease Control at:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list>

TRAVEL (TO AND DURING THE PROGRAM)

Natural disasters, political changes, weather conditions and various other factors may force the cancellation or alteration of a field school. IFR recommends students only purchase airline tickets that are fully refundable and consider travel insurance in case a program or travel plans must change for any reason. General information for this program is below, but keep in mind we will discuss any updated travel information and regulations during the required program orientation, which could affect travel plans.

All students will be picked up from the Sofia airport with an organized shuttle and delivered to the project hotel [Villa Velis](https://www.villavelis.com/en/) in the village of Karabunar the next day. The project cost does not cover the shuttle price. Once at the project venue students and project staff will travel to and from the excavation site daily by shuttle (short 15 minute ride in each direction) that affords reasonable spacing of occupants. Students are able to get general information, essential travel basics and tips concerning the project location and the country at <http://www.bhfieldschool.org/countries/bulgaria> (**for Bulgaria**) and <http://www.bhfieldschool.org/project/PISexc> (**for the project / see the map on the bottom of project web site**). All students will receive a travel info-sheet with specific travel details prior to departure.

If you missed your connection or your flight is delayed, please call, text or email the field school director / project staff immediately (email: bhfs.admissions@gmail.com). A local emergency mobile phone number will be provided to all enrolled students.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodation will be in the Villa Velis Hotel at Karabunar, (<https://www.villavelis.com/en/>) in comfortable rooms with 2-3 beds, bathrooms with a shower, air-conditioning, and TV. The hotel has a small swimming pool and SPA, free of charge for the participants in the field school. Inexpensive laundry service and free Wi-Fi are provided in the hotel. The cleaning staff in the hotel will clean and disinfect the rooms & bathrooms and common spaces every day. In the beginning of the field school students will be introduced to the safety protocol for the hotel, the shuttle and the site upon arrival.

Karabunar is a small village: there are a small number of food & beverage shops, bars & taverns, a winery, and a Christian Orthodox church, St. John the Baptist. The closest supermarket, pharmacy, bank with ATM, and medical office are in the municipal town of Septemvri, 8 km away from Karabunar. The distance from the hotel to the site is app. 15 km/9.5 mi, and it takes an app. 15/20 min drive. Daily BHF shuttle service is arranged for the participants to bring them to the site and back. The site has electricity, there are portable toilets and running water.

Meals: Three meals (fresh, organic Bulgarian homemade food) per day are covered by the program fees. Meals usually take place in the hotel's restaurant, except lunch packages during excursions. This field school can accommodate vegetarians, vegans, and individuals with lactose-intolerance. Kosher and gluten-free diets are not possible to accommodate in this location.

Students must pay on their own for extra days and for single room accommodation as well as for extra meals, beverages, services, and products!

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Bulgarian dialing code: +359

Time Difference (Summer time): GMT / UTC +2 hours (March through October)

Measure units: degree Celsius (°C), meter (m.), gram (gr.), liter (l)


Money/Banks/Credit Cards: The Bulgarian currency is the Bulgarian LEV (BGN). You cannot pay in Euros or other foreign currency, except in casinos and big hotels (where the exchange rate is really unfair)! Since 1997, the Bulgarian LEV has been pegged to the EURO at the exchange rate of 1 euro = 1.955 lev (usually sold for 1.94 lev). Bulgarian banks accept all credit cards and sometimes travellers' cheques. Usually banks open at 8.30 – 9.00 am and close at 5.00-6.00 pm. They work from Monday to Friday. Shopping malls, supermarkets, and many shops in Sofia and/or bigger towns and resorts will also accept credit cards. This is not valid for smaller "domestic" shops throughout the country where the only way of payment is cash! You can see Bulgarian notes and coins in circulation at:

http://www.bnb.bg/NotesAndCoins/NACNotesCurrency/index.htm?toLang=_EN

Exchange of foreign currencies is possible not only at banks but also at numerous exchange offices. Most of them don't collect a commission fee and have acceptable exchange rates (+/- 0.5-1,5% of the official rate) However, those located in shopping areas of big cities, resorts, railway stations, airports, etc., can overcharge you in varying amounts. Ask in advance how much money you will get!

ATMs are available all over the country and POS-terminals are in every bank office.

If you plan to use your credit/debit card in Bulgaria, please inform your bank of your intention before departure! Otherwise it is very possible that your bank will block your account/ card for security reasons when you try to use it abroad! Unblocking your card, when abroad, may cost you several phone calls and a lot of money.

Electricity: The electricity power in the country is stable at 220 - Volts A.C. (50 Hertz). Don't forget to bring a voltage converter, if necessary! Outlets in Bulgaria generally accept 1 type of plug:  two round pins. If your appliance's plug has a different shape, you will need a plug adapter.

Emergency

National emergency number is 112.

EQUIPMENT LIST

- Work shoes (preferably closed shoes like sneakers or running shoes)
- An additional set of walking and hiking shoes
- Clothing suitable for outdoor activities (consider weather conditions from hot and sunny to rainy and chilly)
- Wide brim hat for field work
- A light raincoat for possible rainy and windy days is recommended
- Medication - It is not necessary to bring over-the-counter medicine from your country since you can buy all common types in Bulgaria (e.g. aspirin, anti-insecticides, sunscreen, etc.) It is recommended, however, that you bring any individual prescription medicines
- A converter for an EU type electricity wall-plug if needed
- A good attitude for work, fun, study, and discoveries