

## Geography in the Bulgarian school education

### I. The place of geography within your schooling system.

#### Place of Geography and Economics in the Bulgarian school education

##### from 5 up to 7 grades

<b>Compulsory school subjects</b>	<b>Total number of teaching hours from 5 up to 7 grades</b>
Bulgarian language and literature	1430
Mathematics	940
Physical education	536
Music	417
Arts	417
Man and nature	270
Technology and Entrepreneurship	268
History and civilization	208
<b>Geography and Economics</b>	<b>176</b>

### II. How many classes a week?

#### Geography classes per week in the Bulgarian school

Grade	Years											
	1880	1903	1912	1925	1936	1945	1953	1964	1979	1990	2001	2016*
V	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	1,5
VI	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	1,5
VII	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	2
VIII	2	-	-	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	1
IX	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	-	2	1	1,5	1
X	-	2	1	-	1	1	2	2	2	2	1,5	2,5
XI	-	-	1	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
XII	-	-	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total number</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9,5</b>

(prof. P. Lazarov, 2009)

August 2016\* according to adoption of the new Educational law

As you can see from both tables Geography is a compulsory subject in the school education from V up to X grade. It has the least number of teaching hours only 176 from V to VII grade and 162 from VIII to X grade. What does it mean? That is meant that the society and responsible authorities do not understand the importance of geographical concepts and knowledge for the development of the society and human beings as a whole. But Geography is still preferred subject for a second baccalaureate exam after finishing secondary education. Because of less teaching hours the exam results are usually bad.

Association of professional geographers and regionalists (APGR) try to convince the responsible authorities from the Ministry of Education and Science to revise its opinion on the number of classes from V to VII grade and to have at least 2 hours per week, as well as to concern Geography as a compulsory subject in the higher secondary education from XI to XII grade /to be written into new Educational law/. There were a lot of meetings with authorities from the Ministry of Education and Science, press conferences and teacher's protests. But we did not satisfy by the result because we will teach Geography with 1,5 hours per week in most of the school grades.

The Association has secured Geography teachers with the opportunity to teach not only Geography but also subjects "Civic Education" and "World and Personality" in the school system.

The main concepts within your national/regional curriculum?

The main goal of Geography education is to establish geographical culture of students which includes: geographical knowledge and skills, competences and behavior patterns in geographical space and their personal value system.

Grades	Geographical themes in different stages of the school system	Total number of teaching hours per week
	<b>Junior school</b>	
V	The Earth as a planet- natural and human global concepts; regional – Africa and Antarctica	1,5
VI	Regional geography – continents: North and South America, Asia, Australia and Oceania	1,5
VII	Europe Balkan peninsular , Bulgaria	2
	<b>First stage of secondary school</b>	
VIII	Natural Geography of the world	1
IX	Human Geography of the World	1
	<b>Second stage of secondary school</b>	
X	Bulgarian Geography	2,5
XI-XII	Optional	=

Are there differences between national/regional curriculums in your country?- There are not differences between national/regional curriculums in Bulgaria.

## For the workshop on Territorial Identity:

1. How is the topic of territorial identity (characteristic features of an area and people's affective attachment to their region, nation, and Europe) reflected in the national geography curricula of your country (contents and competences)?

There themes related to the characteristics of the population at different level:

global level – race and religion and their reflection on lifestyle and culture, economic activities  
regional level – for example, VII grade, theme "Population of Balkan peninsular - mosaic of religions and cultures" but this lesson is for 1 hour and we cannot present this variety in details /just mentioned different religious, language groups and similarities in culture of all Balkan countries.

local level - race, religion and culture characteristics of the population of a certain country, some famous people who are known all over the world because their contribution to the mankind.

2. What is the role of Geography in preserving and promoting territorial identity and cultural heritage?

Usually because of the less teaching hours teachers give students project work to present cultural heritage of region or country it also is a part of extracurricular activities which are organized by geography teachers at school. In my school 138 Secondary School there are different clubs. I am responsible for European club and activities of the First Bulgarian school for arts and cultural dialogue between East and West "Ikuo Hirayama", based at 138 Secondary school.

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Interesting resources from the European Geosciences Union (EGU). I have participated in one of EGU's Geosciences Information for Teachers (GIFT) workshops and I can recommend it to you.

Dear GIFT teachers,

Happy new school year! I am writing to update you on the European Geosciences Union (EGU) [Planet Press initiative](#) and to, once again, ask you to help us spread the word about this educational project.

[Planet Presses](#) are short versions of our press releases (which are articles for journalists about new geoscientific research published in EGU's scientific journals) written in child-friendly language. The project aims to get children (mainly 7–13 year olds), and their parents and educators, interested in and engaged with up-to-date scientific research and news. The English-language texts are reviewed by both scientists and educators to make sure they are accurate and clear to their target audience.

[We currently have nearly 40 Planet Press texts published online \(and free to use\)](#), covering topics such as air pollution, melting glaciers, climate change, earthquakes, ocean sciences, droughts and floods, and even "hair ice"!

All texts are available in English, but we have also been working with scientists and teachers to translate the texts. Thanks to their help, all texts have been translated to Serbian and we have also published some translations in Spanish (38), Turkish (12), Greek (10), French (28), German (23), Swedish (15), Italian (38), Portuguese (30), Russian (2), Slovenian (6), Hungarian (22), Dutch (13), Croatian (3), and Polish (2).

**We believe sharing new and exciting geoscientific research with children can inspire them to develop an interest in the Earth, planetary and space sciences. If you are a parent or an educator, you are encouraged to use Planet Press as an educational tool, to teach or to discuss geoscientific discoveries with your children.**

I hope you like this project and that you get the opportunity to use Planet Press in your classroom. If you teach older students, but know of others who could use Planet Press in their classrooms, I am attaching a flyer about this project to help you spread the word about it.

Last but not the least, a very heartfelt THANK YOU to all those among you who have helped us review and/or translate the texts!

Best wishes,  
Bárbara

*You are receiving this email because you have participated in one or more of EGU's Geosciences Information for Teachers (GIFT) workshops. We don't send emails about EGU's new [educational initiatives](#) very often, but if you'd prefer not to receive more messages from us, please send an email to [media@egu.eu](mailto:media@egu.eu) with subject "Unsubscribe from GIFT list".*

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### Information for **Association of professional geographers and regionalists (APGR), Republic of Bulgaria**

The APGR was established in May 2014. It was inscribed in the register of legal entities as an association of non-profit public benefit by Sofia City Court, Decision № 1 / 07.11.2014.

As a new organization the APGR has managed to make its message to over 1,600 geographers from around the country up to 01.08.2015. Nearly 1,200 of them are already actively involved in

its first initiatives. Over 1,000 have been officially submitted applications and documents for membership in the Association. So far the majority of the membership of APGR are teachers in primary, secondary and high schools. Active work lies ahead for attraction of geographers practicing other professions in the Association. It will be attracted other professionals using regional research approaches in the medium term.

The APGR has established regional branches in all administrative district centers. Steps are being taken for the establishment of municipal units in other major cities of the country - the first successful steps in this regard were made in Dupnitsa, Samokov, Etropole, Kazanlak, Karlovo, Nova Zagora and Karnobat. It was held the first meeting of the Board of coordinators and secretaries of the regional branches of APGR, in May 2015.

The main objectives of the APGR are related to proclamation of Geography as a complex science with interdisciplinary character and unique spatial research approach as a fundamental part of public knowledge with a huge applied potential. The APGR are going to realize organizational and methodological support of activities in higher, secondary and primary schools, NGOs and other legal entities associated with geographical researches, teaching and dissemination of geographical knowledge about the world, the Bulgaria homeland and its regions, protection of unique natural and cultural sites, participation in national and international projects and programmes. The Association is planned to create favorable conditions for dissemination and exchange of geographical knowledge and useful regional practices through paper or electronic publications, websites, mass media and information. It will conduct voluntary coordination of professional activity between: Bulgarian citizens and / or EU citizens with acquired higher geographical education; Geography teachers in primary, secondary and higher education; Citizens with higher education and / or teaching experience in Earth sciences, Regional Geography integrated with other scientific fields using regional research approaches; Natural and legal persons recognized the importance of spatial geographic analysis for social development in Bulgaria. The APGR supports the interaction between professional geographers and the central and regional public authorities in Bulgaria as well as works under legalization of geographer profession through its inclusion in the list of regulated professions in the Republic of Bulgaria. The APGR provides legal advice and economic consultation, legal assistance, moral, logistic and material support, protecting the professional rights of geographers and regionalists and represents geographical community in Bulgaria to civil society in the country and at international scientific forums of geographers.

“Rodopski izvor” Str. № 64 A; residential area “Manastirski livadi”;

municipality “Stolichna”; region “Vitosha”

Sofia, 1618, Bulgaria

Email: [apgrbulgaria@gmail.com](mailto:apgrbulgaria@gmail.com)