

Report

Flags of Bulgarian municipalities

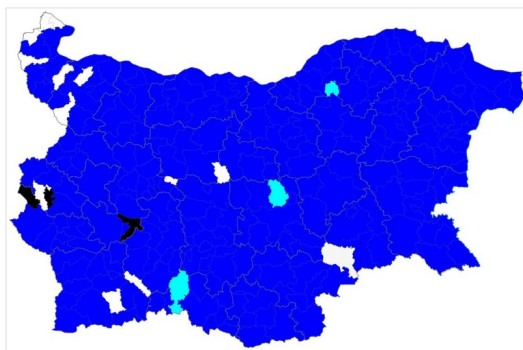
Stoyan Antonov

The Republic of Bulgaria is one of a number of post-communist countries in central and eastern Europe. It has been a member of the EU since 2007.

It includes 27 provinces, subdivided into 264 municipalities (*община, obshtina*), and a metropolitan capital province (Sofia-Grad). All areas take their names from their respective administrative centre. Municipalities are run by mayors, who are elected on four-year terms, and by directly elected municipal councils. Bulgaria is a highly centralised state, where the national Council of Ministers directly appoints regional governors and provides most of the funding for all provinces and municipalities.

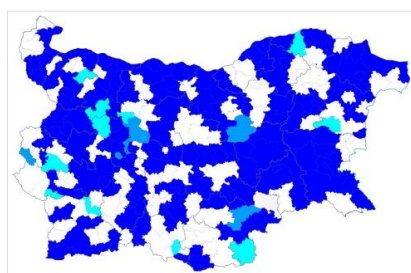
Local authorities adopt flags under a variety of legislation. This includes the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria (1991); the Law for Local Self-government and Local Administration (1991), whose Article 16 specifies that municipalities shall define their symbols and honorary titles in accordance with the law; the Law for the State Seal and the National Flag of the Republic of Bulgaria (1998); and of course the ordinances, statutes, rules and decisions of the municipal councils themselves.

Information has been collected about municipal flags and collated within a database. The accompanying map shows that 249 (or 94 per cent) of Bulgaria's 265 municipalities have adopted a flag, 3 municipalities (or 1 per cent) have not; and we have no available data for the remaining 13 (or 5 per cent). We have details of 246 (or 93 per cent) of the 249 flags adopted, leaving 3 yet to be described.



*Bulgarian municipalities: flag known (dark blue),
flag unknown (light blue), no flag (black), no data (white)*

The second map shows the municipalities with published flag regulations (dark blue), draft regulations (medium blue), or no regulations as yet (pale blue).



- Municipalities with published flag regulations
- Municipalities with published drafts of flag regulations
- Municipalities with unpublished flag regulations
- No data

Bulgarian municipalities with or without published flag regulations

While most municipalities have flag regulations, published or unpublished, noticeable differences between regulation and practice can nonetheless arise, with vertically oriented designs and unofficial variants.



Flag of Promorsko (Burgas Province), conventionally displayed



Flag of Brezovo (Plovdiv Province), vertically orientated



Flag of Kavarna (Dobrich Province), unofficial

The municipality of Panagyurishte provides an example of such variants. The regulations call for a 'unique flag' with monocolour versions of the local arms on one side and the national arms on the reverse. A second flag, the 'insignia during representative occasions' displays the arms in the upper hoist corner. Yet in use, the arms are shown partly coloured.

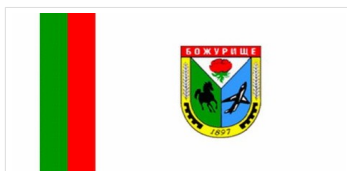


Flags of the municipality of Panagyurishte (Pazardzhik Province): left, as officially described; right, reverse as officially described

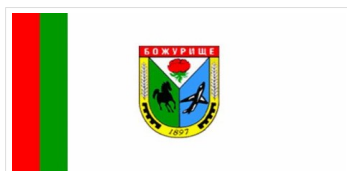


Flags of the municipality of Panagyurishte (Pazardzhik Province): left, for use at representative occasions; right, as actually used

Turning to Bozhuriste, Article 10 of the Ordinance on the Symbols of the Municipality of Bozhuriste (2007) states: 'The flag of the Municipality of Bozhuriste is made as a unique silk cloth of dimensions 90cm × 170 cm. The coat of arms is placed in the centre and is in silk thread'. Yet two versions of the flag exist – one with a green panel next to the hoist, and one with a red.



Flags of Bozhuriste (Sofia Province): green panel next to the hoist. Green Party website, www.zelenite.bg 7874 [accessed 30 June 2017]



Flags of Bozhuriste (Sofia Province): red panel next to the hoist. asparuhov.blogspot.bg [accessed 30 June 2017]

The municipalities of Maritsa and Krushari have chosen an identical design for the reverse of their flag. Both are green with a circle of yellow stars, both apparently 'symbolising the nineteen settlements' within each municipality.



Flag of Maritsa, obverse and reverse

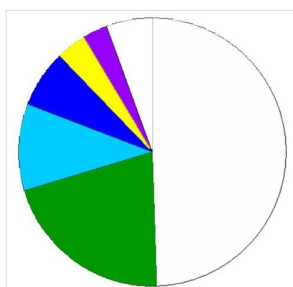


Flag of Krushari, obverse and reverse

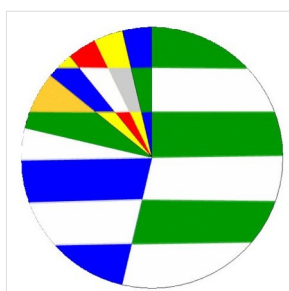
The vast majority of flags are monocoloured with a charge. Of the 246 known flags, all but one bear a charge of some kind. Of these 245, 162 are monocoloured, while 83 are multicoloured. The different arrangements of the multicoloured flags are summarised below:

One field (14)	with ornaments (3)	
	with border (11)	a border of three (6)
		a plain border (4)
		an inner border of three (1)
Bicolour (14)	horizontal (11)	simple (9)
		in base (3)
	vertical (1)	
	diagonal (2)	
Triband (15)	horizontal (7)	
	vertical (8)	
Tricolour (6)	horizontal (4)	
	vertical (2)	
Other (34)		

The most popular colours and colour combinations are shown in the accompanying diagrams.



Monocolours, most popular colours



Bicolours, most popular colour combinations

Ratios

The most popular ratio, used in 61 municipalities, is that of the Bulgarian national flag, 3:5. In 22 municipalities, the ratio is 19:17; in 6 cases, 5:8; in three cases, 50:83; and in two cases, 3:4. In addition there are single examples of 2:3, 12:33, 18:31, 47:71, 14:27, 24:43 and 13:20. In most cases, the ratios are fixed in centimetres rather than as a ratio per se.

The proportions of other elements in the design, for example the charge, are not defined.



Colours

The colours used in each flag are rarely described in terms of conventional colour palettes: e.g. 'sunflower yellow', 'terracotta brown' (burnt sienna), 'old gold', 'purple-violet', and 'silver-grey' all appear. The Pantone Matching System is used in only five cases; the CMYK system in another five (in a further example, the CMYK system is used to define the colours but is not specifically named in the regulations). Only once are the colours defined by both Pantone and CMYK. Orafol, 'a global leader in the manufacture of innovative self-adhesive graphic films, reflective materials and adhesive tape systems', is used in one case. And in two cases, the colours are not even mentioned.

Regulations

Legislative texts consider the municipal flag as a unique item, kept in the mayor's office. The texts generally include: colour, dimensions, flag protocol, rules for reproducing the flag, and restrictions on its use. Such restrictions typically forbid the use of the flag in connection with activities that are 'political, religious and nationalistic' (55 cases), 'political, religious, ethnic and chauvinistic' (10 cases), or 'political, religious and anti-Bulgarian' (12 cases).

Conclusions

We may discern a number of trends in the design and use of Bulgarian municipal flags:

- almost all use the municipal emblem;
- two-thirds use a plain monocoloured field;
- the most popular colours are white (c.49 per cent), followed by green (c.23 per cent) and light blue (c.11 per cent);
- the most popular colour combination is a white-green bicolour (c.54 per cent), followed by white-blue (25 per cent);
- the most common ratio is 3:5 (c.60 per cent), followed by 19:17 (c.22 per cent);
- flag regulations are rarely vexillologically based (the construction, colours and ratio are often not specified);
- the flag is defined as a unique item, more like military colour than a municipal flag;
- the flags are frequently displayed vertically;
- there is often a difference between the official description and the real object; and
- despite the official regulations, unofficial flags continue to be flown.

The following pages display the flags of Bulgaria's municipalities, grouped by province:

Blagoevgrad (*Belitsa and Hadzhidimovo not shown; no data for Gotse Delchev*)



Bansko



Blagoevgrad



Garmen



Kresna



Petrich



Razlog



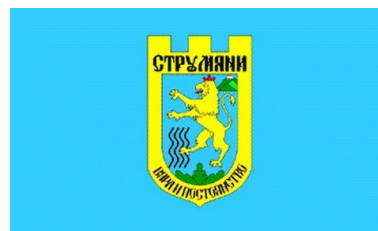
Sandanski



Satovcha



Simitli



Strumyani



Yakoruda



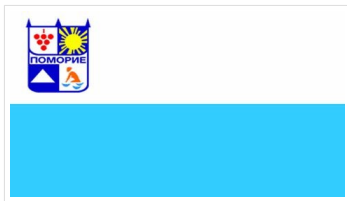
Burgas (Karnobat, Ruen and Sungurlare not shown)



Aytos



Malko Tarnovo



Pomorie



Burgas



Kameno



Primorsko



Sozopol



Sredets



Nesebar



Tsarevo



Dobrich



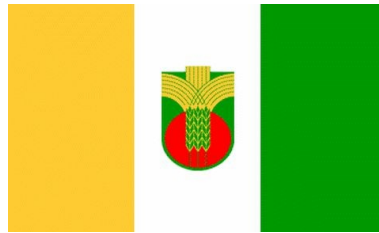
Balchik



General Toshevo



Dobrich



Dobrichka



Kavarna



Krushari (obverse)



Krushari (reverse)



Tervel



Shabla



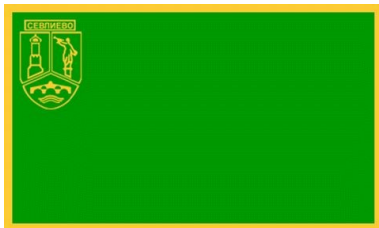
Gabrovo



Gabrovo



Dryanovo



Sevlievno



Tryavna

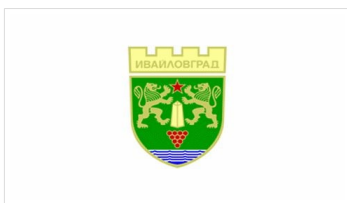
Haskovo (*Svilengrad and Simeonovgrad not shown; no data for Topolovgrad*)



Dimitrovgrad (obverse)



Dimitrovgrad (reverse)



Ivaylovgrad



Lyubimets



Madzharovo



Minerali Bani



Stambolovo

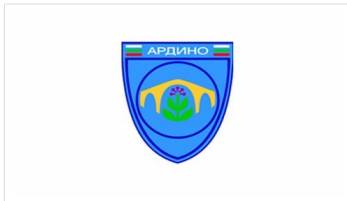


Harmanli



Haskovo

Kardzhali



Ardino



Dzhebel



Kirkovo



Krumovgrad



Kardzhali



Momchilgrad



Chernoochene

Kyustendil (Bobov Dol, Boboshevo, Nevestino, Rila not shown; Treklyano no flag)



Dupnitsa



Kocherinovo

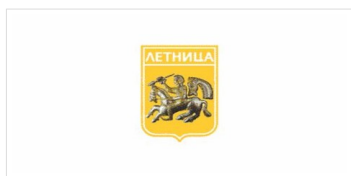


Kyustendil



Sapareva Banja

Lovech (no data for Apriltsi)



Letnitsa



Lovech



Lukovit (obverse, drawn by Ivan Sarajčić)



Lukovit (reverse, drawn by Ivan Sarajčić)



Tetevan



Troyan



Ugarchin



Yablanitsa

Montana (Varshets and Yakimovo not shown; Georgi Damyanovo and Medkovets no data)



Berkovitsa



Boychinovtsi



Brusartsi



Valchedram



Lom



Montana



Chiprovtsi

Pazardzhik (no data for Sarnitsa)



Batak



Belovo



Bratsigovo



Velingrad



Lesichovo



Pazardzhik



Panagyurishte



Peshtera



Rakitovo



Septemvri



Strelcha

Pernik (no data for Zemen; Kovachevtsi has no flag)



Brznik



Pernik

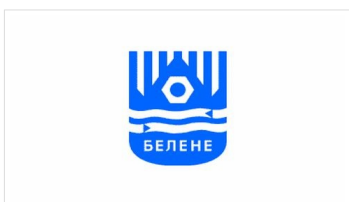


Radomir

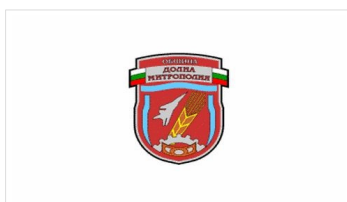


Tran

Pleven (Gulyantsi not shown)



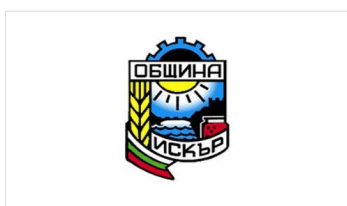
Belene



Dolna Mitropoliya



Dolni Dabnik



Iskar



Knezha



Levski



Nikopol



Pleven



Pordim



Cherven Bryag

Plovdiv (Perushtita not shown)



Asenovgrad



Brezovo



Kaloyanovo



Karlovo



Krichim



Kuklen



Laki



Maritsa



Plovdiv



Parvomay



Rakovski



Rodopi



Sadovo



Sopot (drawn by Jens Pattke)



Stamboliyski



Saedinenie



Hisarya

Razgrad (Zavet and Tsar Kaloyan not shown)



Ispereh



Kubrat



Loznitsa



Razgrad



Samuil

Ruse



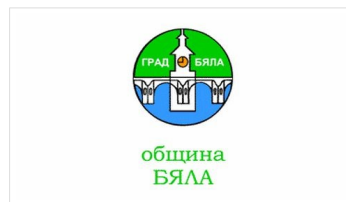
Borovo



Borovo



Dve Mogili



Byala



Vetovo



Ivanovo



Ruse



Slivo Pole



Tsenov

Shumen (*Veliki Preslav, Varbitsa, Kaolinovo, Novi Pazar, Hitrino not shown*)



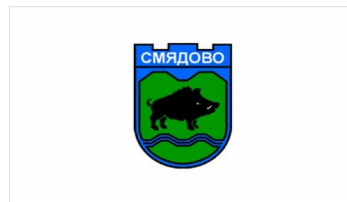
Venets



Kaspichan



Nikola Kozievo



Smyadovo



Shumen

Silistra (*Dulovo not shown*)



Alfatar



Glavnitsa



Kaynardzha



Silistra



Sitovo

Sliven



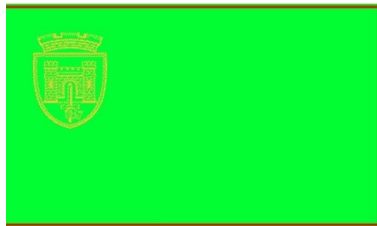
Kotsa



Nva Zagora



Sliven

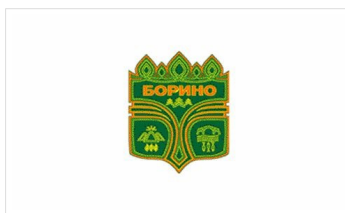


Tvarditsa

Smolyan (Devin not shown)



Banite



Borino



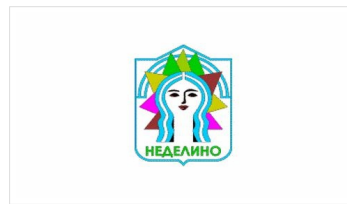
Dospat



Zlatograd



Madan



Nedelino



Rudozem

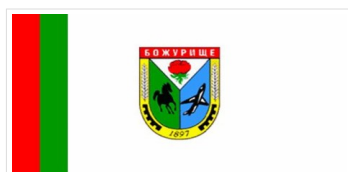


Smolyan



Chepelare

Sofia (Zlatitsa, Pirdop and Svoge not shown; no data for Anton; Kostenets has no flag)



Bozhurishte



Botevgrad



Godech



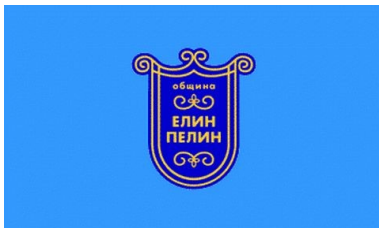
Gorna



Dolna Banya



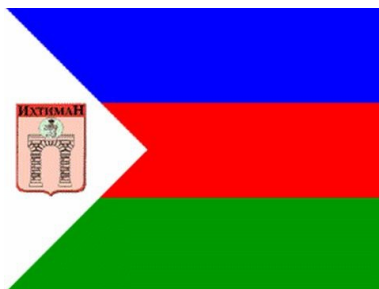
Dragoman



Elin Pelin



Etropole



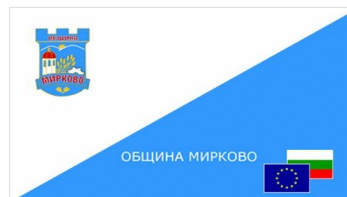
Ihtiman



Koprivshitsa



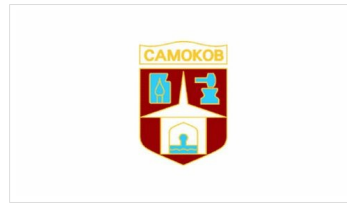
Kostinbrod



Mirkovo



Pravets



Samokov



Slivnitsa



Chavdar



Chelopech

City of Sofia



Sofia

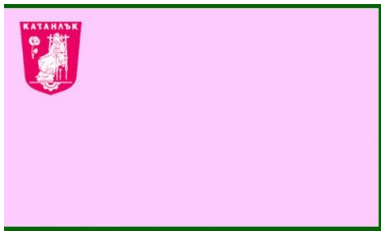
Stara Zagora (Galabovo, Maglizh and Chirpan not shown)



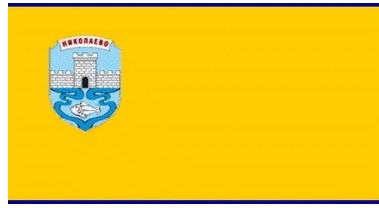
Bratya Daskalovi



Gurkovo



Kazaniak



Nikoldevo



Opan



Pavel Banya



Radnevo



Stara Zagora (obverse)

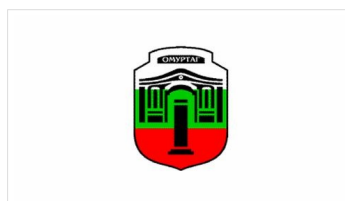


Stara Zagora (reverse)

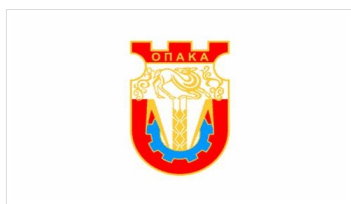
Targovishte



Antonovo



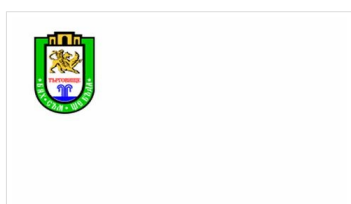
Omurtag



Opaka



Popovo



Targovishte

Varna (Aksakovo, Devnya, Doolni Chiflik and Dalgopol not shown)



Avren



Beloslav



Byala



Varna



Vetrino



Valchi Dol

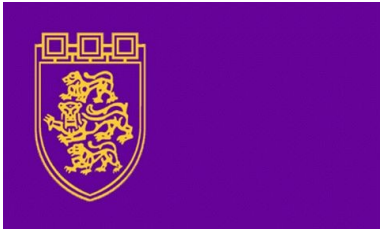


Provadiya



Suvorovo

Veliko Tarnovo



Veliko Tarnovo



Gorna Oryahovitsa



Elena



Zlatanitsa



Lyaskovets



Pavlikeni



Polski Trambesh



Svishtov



Strazhitsa



Suhindol

Vidin (Kula and Chuprene not shown; no data for Boynitsa, Bregovo, Makresh, Novo Selo and Ruzhintsi)



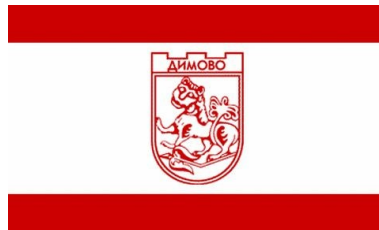
Belogradchik



Vidin



Gramada



Dimovo

Vratsa



Borovan



Byala Slatina



Vratsa



Kozloduy



Krivodo



Mezdra



Miziya



Oryahovo



Roman



Hayredin

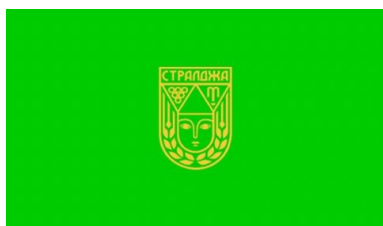
Yambol



Bolyarovo



Elhovo



Straldzha



Tundzha



Yambol