

## How to change Debian GNU / Linux console (tty) language to Bulgarian or Russian Language

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Debian has a package **language-env**. I haven't used my Linux console for a long time. So I couldn't exactly remember how I used to be making the Linux console to support cyrillic language (CP1251, bg\_BG.UTF-8) etc.

I've figured out for the *language-env* existence in Debian Book on hosted on **OpenFMI - Bulgarian Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics website**.

The package info with apt-cache show displays like that:

```
hipo@noah:~/Desktop$ apt-cache show language-env|grep -i -A 3 description
Description: simple configuration tool for native language environment
This tool adds basic settings for natural language environment such as
LANG variable, font specifications, input methods, and so on into
user's several dot-files such as .bashrc and .emacs.
```

What is really strange, is the package maintainer is not Bulgarian, Russian or Ukrainian but Japanese. As you see the developer is weirdly not Bulgarian but Japanese *Kenshi Muto*. What is even more interesting is that it is another japanese that has actually written the script **set-language-env** contained within the package. Checking the script in the header one can see him, *Tomohiro KUBOTA*

Before I've found about the *language-env* existence, I knew I needed to have the respective locales installed on the system with:

```
# dpkg-reconfigure locales
```

So I run **dpkg-reconfigure** to check I have existing the locales for adding the Bulgarian language support.

Checking if the *bulgarian locale* is installed is also possible with **/bin/ls**:

```
# ls -al /usr/share/i18n/locales/*|grep -i bg
-rw-r--r-- 1 root root 8614 Feb 12 21:10 /usr/share/i18n/locales/bg_BG
```

The *language-env* contains a *perl* script called **set-language-env** which is doing the actual **Debian Bulgarianization / cyrillization**. The set-language-env author is another Japanese and again not Slavonic person.

Actually *set-language-env* script is not doing the Bulgariazation but is a wrapper script that uses a number of "hacks" to make the console support cyrillic.

Further on to make the console support cyrillic, execute:

```
hipo@noah:~$ set-language-env
Setting up users' native language environment
by modifying their dot-files.
Type "set-language-env -h" for help.
1 : be (Bielaruskaja,Belarusian)
2 : bg (Bulgarian)
3 : ca (Catala,Catalan)
4 : da (Dansk,Danish)
5 : de (Deutsch,German)
6 : es (Espanol,Spanish)
7 : fr (Francais,French)
8 : ja (Nihongo,Japanese)
9 : ko (Hangul,Korean)
10 : lt (Lietuviu,Lithuanian)
11 : mk (Makedonski,Macedonian)
12 : pl (Polski,Polish)
13 : ru (Russkii,Russian)
14 : sr (Srpski,Serbian)
15 : th (Thai)
16 : tr (Turkce,Turkish)
17 : uk (Ukrajins'ka,Ukrainian)
Input number > 2
```

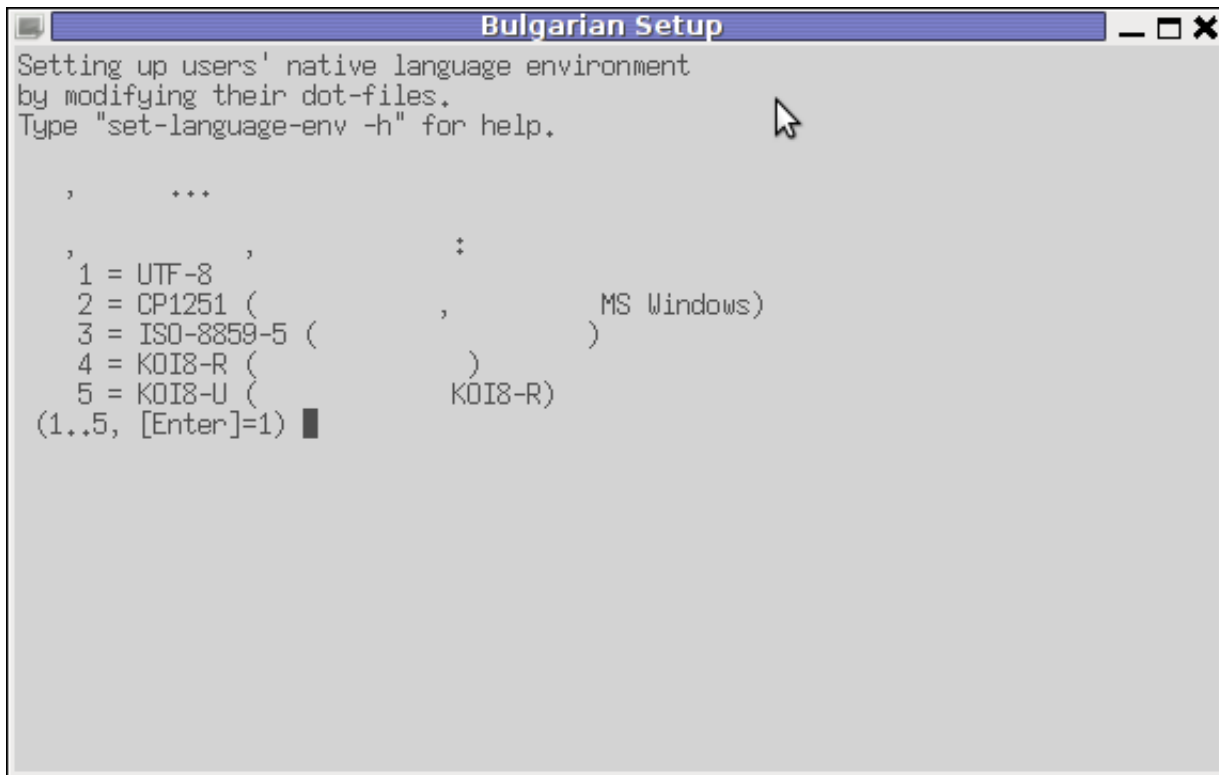
There are many questions in cyrillic list necessary to be answered to exactly define if you need cyrillic language support for GNOME, pine, mutt, console etcetera.

The script will create or append commands to a number of files on the system like `~/.bash_profile`

The script uses the **cyr** command part of the Debian **console-cyrillic** package for the actual Bulgarian Linux localization.

As said it was supposed to also do a localization in the past of many Graphical environment programs, as well as include Bulgarian support for GNOME desktop environment. Since GNOME nowadays is already almost completely translated through its native language files, its preferrable that localization to be done on Linux install time by selecting a country language instead of later doing it with *set-language-env*. If you failed to set the GNOME language during Linux install, then using *set-language-env* will still work. I've tested it and even though a lot of time passed since *set-language-env* was heavily used for bulgarization still the GUI env bulgarization works.

If **set-language-env** is run in gnome-terminal the result, the whole set of question dialogs will pop-up in new xterm and due to a bug, questions imposed will be unreadable as you can see in below screenshot:



If you want to remove the bulgarization, later at certain point, lets you don't want to have the cyrillic console or programs support use:

```
# set-language-env -r
```

Setting up users native language environment'

For anyone who wish to know more in depth, how set-language-env works check the README files in **/usr/share/doc/language-env/** one readme written by the author of the Bulgarian localization part of the package *Anton Zinoviev* is **/usr/share/doc/language-env/README.be-bg-mk-sr-uk**