

Protection Activities of the BRC Refugee-Migrant Service



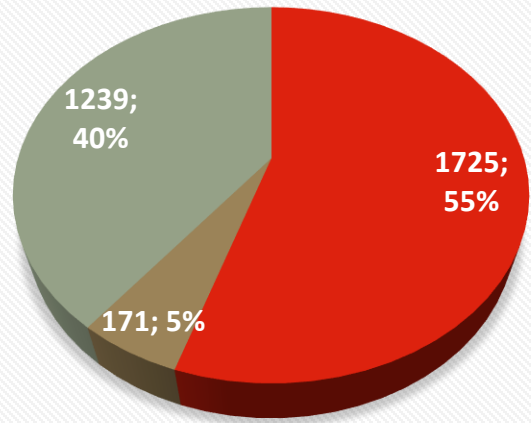
AUGUST 2021



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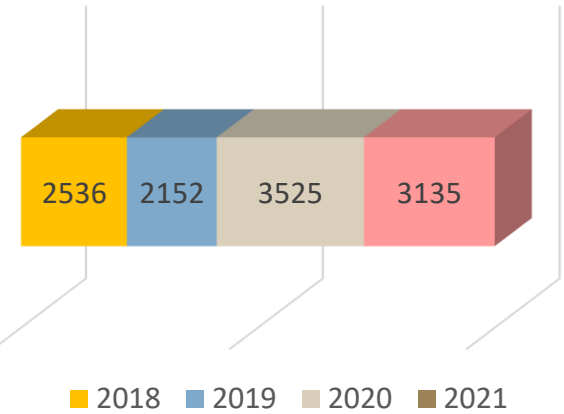


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ENHANCEMENT PLATFORM
PROJECT

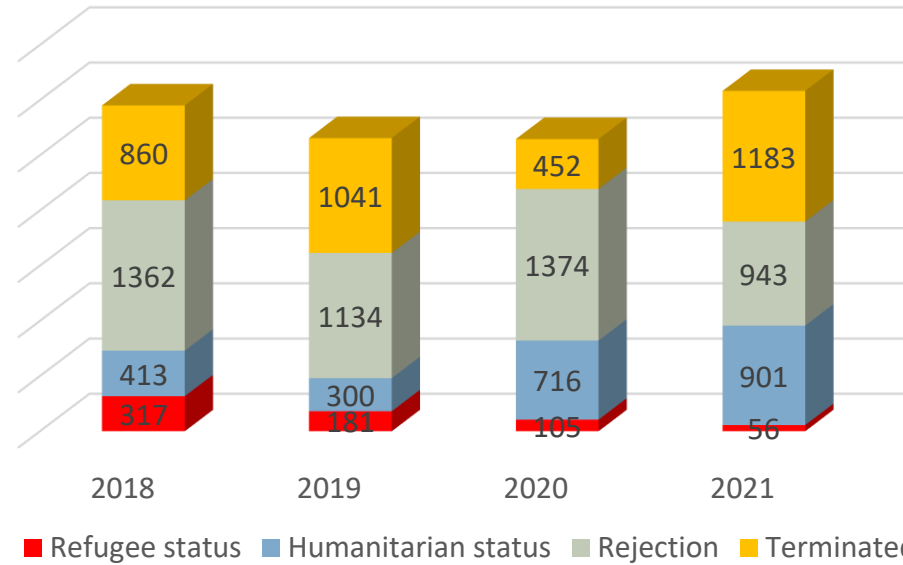


3135 asylum applications as of 31.07.2021

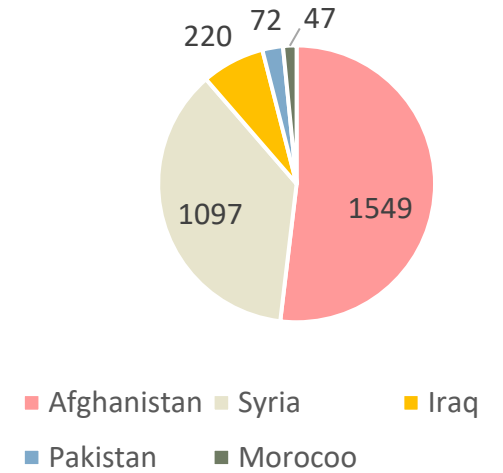
Asylum applications



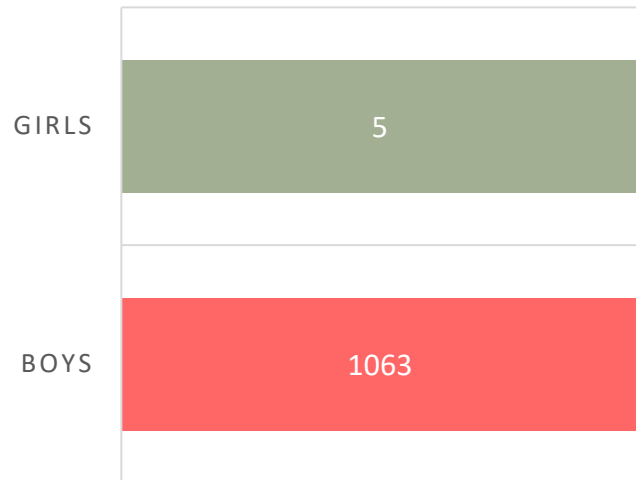
Application decisions 2018-31.07.2021



Top 5 CoO 2021



UAMS



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Refugee-Migrant Service

1993 - UNHCR Implementing partner for local settlement of asylum seekers and refugees in Bulgaria

1997 – Establishment of the Refugee-Migrant Service in BRC HQ, Sofia

Bulgarian Red Cross Law /1995, Article 4 para 6 /

Law on Asylum and Refugees

2008-2013 - Main Partner of the State agency for refugees at the Council of Ministers for the implementation of the National Integration Program for Refugees

Since 2021 – Pilot project for integration of refugees with 2 local municipalities funded by AMIF National Program



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Current projects

- ❖ **UNHCR** Funded Project “ Improvement of Reception and Integration Conditions for Asylum Seekers and Beneficiaries of International Protection”
- ❖ **AMIF** Funded Project „Together for Integration“ with 2 Sofia municipalities and Foundation “Nadya Centre” for PSS and psychiatric check-up and referral
- ❖ **AMIF** Funded Project “ To Get To Know The Other” with State Agency for Child Protection



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Main Protection Domains



Modus Operandi and Target Groups

- ❖ Project based funding
- ❖ Main donors/ funding sources: UNHCR, AMIF/ ERF, Swiss Red Cross, Global Fund to Fight HIV/ AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis trough Ministry of Health, Terre Des 'Homme
- ❖ Current staff members: 18 colleagues, divided in 2 teams / Sofia and Haskovo/ + social worker in BRC branch in Sliven
- ❖ Outreach work in several languages: Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, Turkish, English, French, German, Bulgarian
- ❖ Beneficiaries' groups :

Asylum seekers

Refugees or
Humanitarian
Status Holders

Third country
nationals

Undocumented
migrants

Map of the services

Sofia city region

There are 3 open type reception facilities and 1 closed type run by State agency for refugees;

RMS of BRS operates in 3 locations:

- BRC HQs;
- BRC Community Hub;
- BRC municipal info spot



Sliven region

1 reception facility in Banya run by SAR;
BRC operates in the facility;

Haskovo region

1 reception facility in Harmanli; 1 TC in Pastrogor; 1 detention centre in Lyubimets;
BRC operates in the RRC and TC;



RRC Vrazhdebna in Sofia

Capacity:
370

Capacity:
70



RRC Banya



RRC Ovcha kupel in Sofia

Capacity:
860

Total capacity
SAR centres
5160 asylum
seekers

Capacity:
320



TC Pastrogor



RRC Voenna rampa in Sofia

Capacity:
800

Capacity:
2710



RRC Harmanli

Support to asylum seekers in reception centres

1. Humanitarian and cash-based interventions;
2. Health care;
3. Case management and social work;
4. Raising awareness programmes;



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Refugees and migrants

1. RMS and Covid-19
2. Accommodation and prevention of homelessness;
3. Health care;
4. Community engagement and accountability;
5. Education;
6. Child protection | GBV | PSS



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RMS and Covid-19 in 2020

Hotline in 6 languages – **2048** calls;
 State-funded food programme – **121** families/**241** refugees;
660 hygiene kits to accommodated in detention centres;
128 families/individuals support with CBA + **47** with food vouchers;
160 purchased medicines;
279 refugees in Sofia provided with hygiene items;
131 UAMs provided with clothing;



BRC REFUGEE-MIGRANT SERVICE

Please see information below the current measures and options to be followed during the COVID-19 emergency, as well as for information on possible support from the BRC.

The phone line is open from 10:00 am to 20:00 pm and is available in the following languages:

ARABIC
0884 964 031
0885 473 377
0885 896 146

FARSI
0882 355 966
0884 623 526

TURKSIH
0884 623 526

ENGLISH AND FRENCH
0886 637 928

0889 921 838
ENGLISH AND FRENCH

0889 921 838
ENGLISH



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Accommodation and prevention of homelessness

Accommodation in state-funded social services



CBA for payment of monthly rent/hostel

Housing support to refugees together with 2 Sofia municipalities

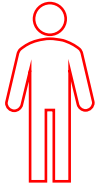


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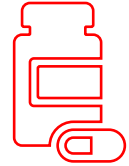
Health care



Restoring access to the health care system



Accompaniment to medical institutions and interpretation
1522



Purchase of medicines
128



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Community engagement and accountability



Adaptation and translation of info materials;
Info sessions with asylum seekers and refugees (Q&A);
Hotline – 2574 calls

Support to refugee start up – 31 applications; 17 interviews; 5 selected



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Education

10 language courses (A1; A2; B1) in 2020 in Sofia and Varna;
7 language courses (A1; A2; B1) in 2021 in Sofia

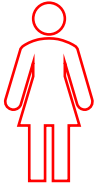


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Child protection | GBV | PSS



GBV workshops for women
(2020 – 20 women were
trained)



Child-friendly space in
the BRC community hub
since 2017 together with
UNHCR



Psycho-social and
psychological consultations
– 681 in 2021



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TÜRKİYE CUMHURİYETİ
AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ BAŞKANLIĞI



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PROT activities in Immigration Detention

August
2021



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BRC Regional Branches

⊕ BRC Branches

The Interactive map is still under development

Regional Branches:

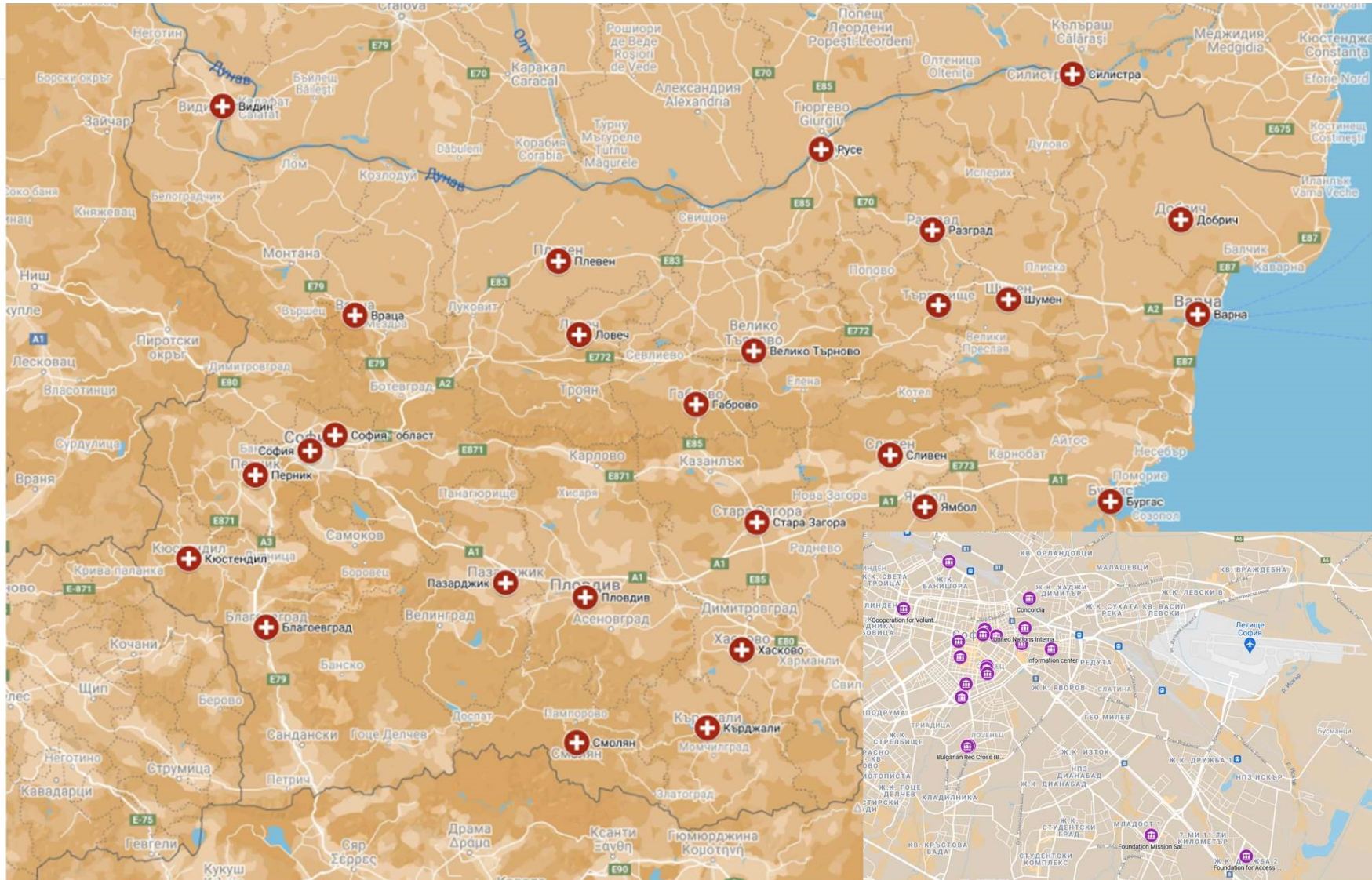
28

Main regions of activities:

2 (Sofia/Haskovo)

Migrants have crossed BG border in 2020:

12 470



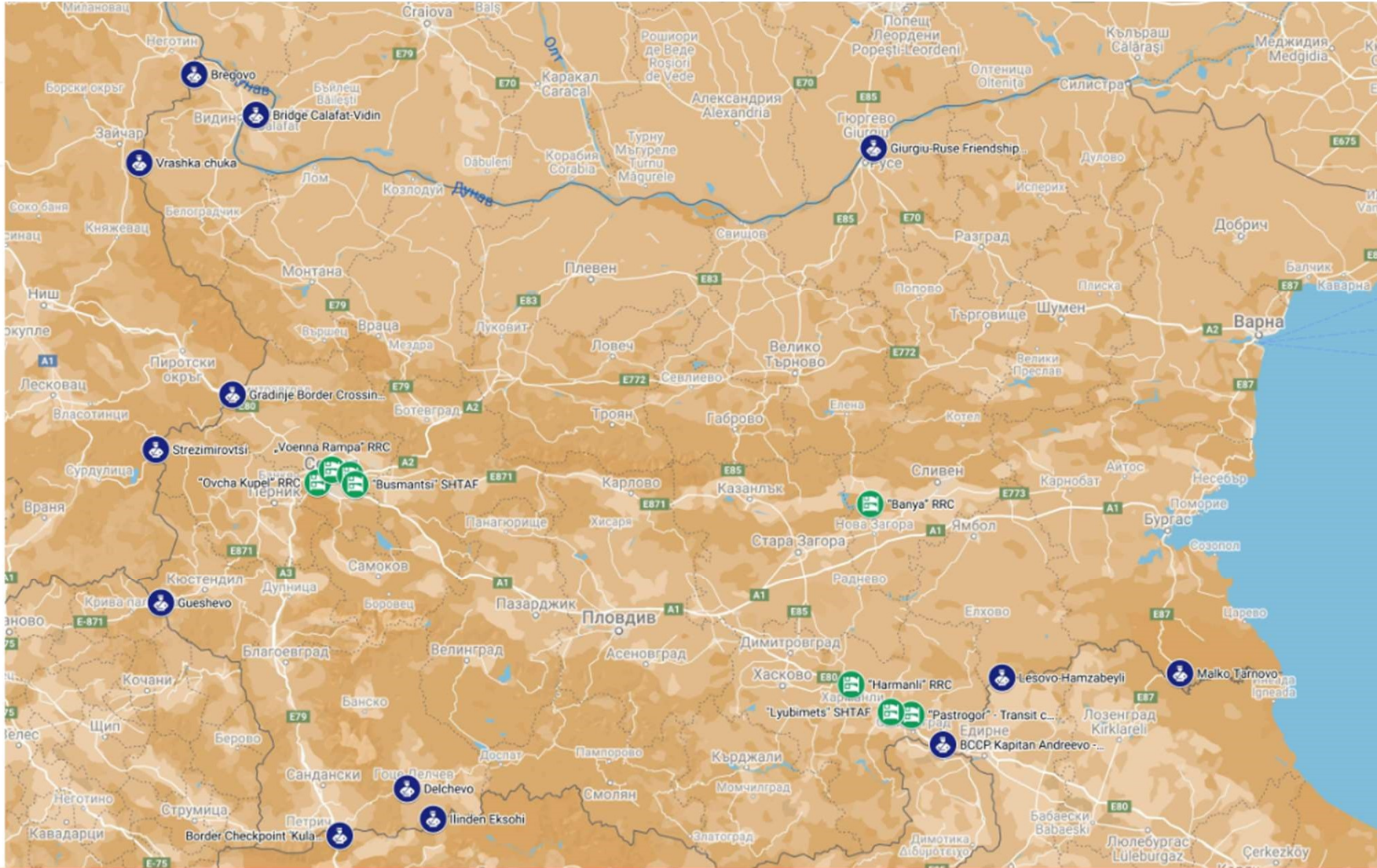
Migration Centers

- All Centers

Border Checkpoints

- All Border Checkpoints

The Interactive map is still under development





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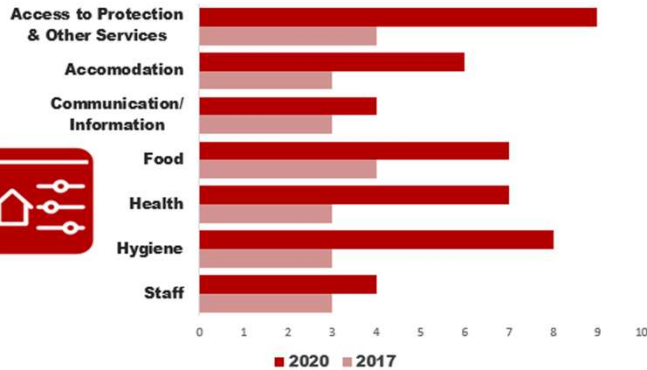
Detention Centre Profile

Busmatsi

The Centre is located near Sofia and it is the largest detention facility for foreigners in Bulgaria. BRC Protection team strives to conduct regular visits to the center to assure adequate dialog between the management and the accommodated. The whole center is around 6000sqm big, including space for sport activities and service grounds. Two big buildings, one administrative, containing the medical cabinet, medical isolator, interview rooms and administration. The other one has 4 floors. On the ground floor, there is a canteen, on the 2nd and 3rd there are male compartments, and on the 1st - the family compartment. Below can be seen visual analysis of the main sectors of focus measured during the years. The overview is based on the analysis of all visit reports and on the number of times issue has been raised or resolved. Sector are scored from 1 to 10 where 1 is severe problem and 10 is desired result.



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**Vulnerable migrants directly supported
2017- 2020**

7875



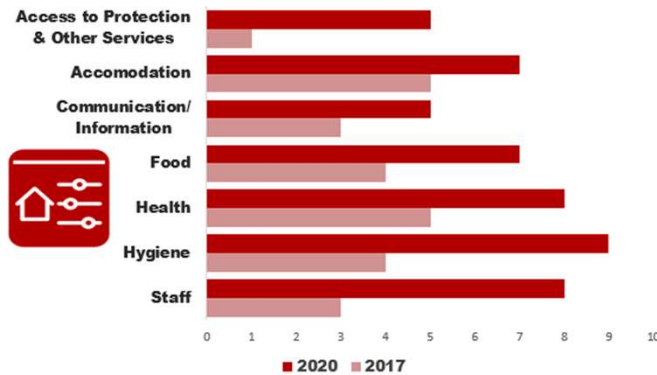
Detention Centre Profile

Lyubimets

Being the second active and largest center in the country, Lyubimets has a crucial role in the migration response in Bulgaria. The center is often used as an example on how other ones should look like and in deed when examining the accommodation and hygiene level in Lyubimets there is little to improve. However, the center is also notorious with its strict rules and BRC access is still not on the desired level. Below can be seen visual analysis of the main sectors of focus measured during the years. The overview is based on the analysis of all visit reports and on the number of times issue has been raised or resolved. Sector are scored from 1 to 10 where 1 is severe problem and 10 is desired result.



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**Vulnerable migrants reached
2017 - 2020**

5588





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Sectors of focus

1. Accommodation & Hygiene
2. Police/ Staff treatment
3. Access to relevant services
4. Health





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PROT during covid-19

The Bulgarian Red Cross is the only organization operating in the detention centers that retained its regular visits and rights during the pandemic. For 2020, the protection team was able to maintain its position before the leadership of the centers and to support a significant number of migrants in need. A summary of the assistance provided is shown in the infographic. Prevention measures were kept in 2021, with less need for the BRC to intervene.

Hygiene Kits



677

Face shields



300

Nitrile Gloves



1000

Soap 1l



120

Reusable face mask

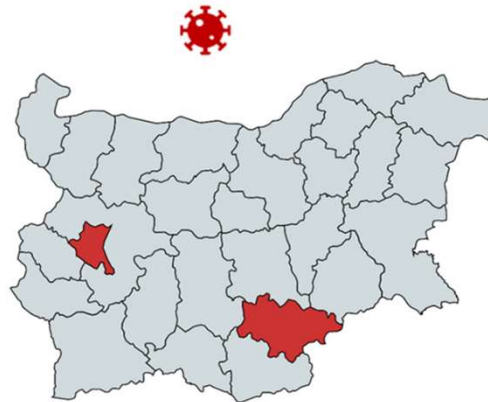


1920

Disinfectant 250 ml



680



Quarantined migrants as of
(31.12.2020)



167

Migrants contracted
covid-19 in 2020



176

Assisted people
with NFIs in 2020r.



3864



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Trainings, meetings, workshops 2021

- NS activities in protection during covid-19 (January)
- Standards & guidelines in protection work (March)
- Protection & promotion of the rights of migrants and asylum seekers (March)
- Protection of imprisoned in the context of Africa/Mali (March)
- Detention in the context of the movement (April)
- Giving Migrants access to basic services: Lessons learned from ICRC operations (May)
- Overview of activities of ICRC (June)
- Accountability to Affected People at the ICRC and synergies with the Movement (July)

- National Society Capacity Exchange and Enhancement – Protection Working group (2021)

- Workshop with Migration Directorate on Human Rights and Exercise of Police Powers - Focus on Migration



8

Trainings Participated



1

International Working Group



4

Organized Workshops



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PoA 2022

- Scaling up trainings and dissemination of information with detention center staff & management
 - Organizing trainings aiming to improve interactions between staff & residents
 - Involving staff in work groups on different issues within the centers
- Enhancing dialogue with Migration Directorate
 - Periodic meeting with directors of SHTAFN
 - Flagship red signals
- Considering MHPSS as well as CBHFA mainstreaming
 - Annual refreshers of first aid
 - Interlinking with NS focal point on MHPSS





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Vision 2021 - 2025

Continue growing perception of authorities towards BRC as a leading agency in protection domain, in the country

- Scaling up trainings and dissemination of information with detention center staff and management
- Enhancing protection focus in immigration detention with a particular focus on children, including UASC and women

Enhancing dialogue with Migration Directorate on the main sectors of focus for the protection team.

- Finalization of the official agreement between BRC and MoI, Migration Directorate, postponed due to covid-19.
- Work closer with Busmantsi management in order to decrease discrepancies in their procedures & practices towards the accommodated.
- Work closer with Lyubimets management in order to increase BRC's access to the facility and improve interviewing practices

Considering MHPSS as well as CBHFA mainstreaming

- Investing in human resource capacity to keep upholding and leveraging protection work



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RESTORING FAMILY LINKS





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Statistics:

- 214 till 22.07. new open TR, 1/3 linked to social cases, the rest - to migration
- 145 phone calls
- 111 Text Messages via E-mail, Facebook, Viber and WhatsApp, data protection is considered
- 12 Assistance and Mediation focus on Cultural and Delicate Cases Context
- 58 visits in 6 open centers (Sofia: Ovcha Kupel, Vrazhdebna, Voenna rampa; Haskovo: Harmanli, Banya, Pastrogor), and 2 closed centers (Sofia: Busmantsi; Haskovo: Lyubimets)

2021



Key accomplishments:

- Development of open secure social lines via Viber, Telegram and WhatsApp in order to fastened accuracy and safety of contacts with related organizations and institutions. (Social Workers, Interviewers related to Migration/RFL cases in Busmanci, Voenna Rampa, Ovcha Kupel, Vrajdebna, etc.), with concern to data protection
- In 2021, RFL activities were again included in the State National Disaster Protection Plan, as part of the Annual Disaster and Crisis Action Plan of the Bulgarian Red Cross.



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Statistics:

- ✓ Adaptation and dissemination of information materials on RFL, TTF (6 monthly posters) and COVID -19, twice per month + upon necessity
- ✓ Over 100 Individual interviews for first 6 months of 2021
- ✓ Mediation & Referrals (BRC RMS, SAR): approx. 10 + per month
- ✓ Cultural context talks. Online interviews, Facebook and other social-media activities



Key accomplishments:

- Updating Flextranet, FLA Interoperability
- Developing a short informative emoji dedicated to WhatsApp and Viber Lines (apart from Facebook page) of RFL Service-Bulgaria, regarding to the planning promotion of RFL activities on social media.
- Working on concept for partnership with relevant organization and other partners who could support and funding RFL activities.
- Scenarios for short messages about the cultural nuances and touches of the incoming migrants for the Open and Closed Centers, e.g. similar to FAQ section. Vice Versa. Concept and plan.



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Trainings, meetings, workshops 2021

- NS activities in RFL dissemination during Covid-19 (January, March)
- Regular TTF CG meetings – monthly: 6
- Regular online meeting between representatives of the NS from the region and representatives of ICRC Regional Delegation: 4
- Briefing on Trace the Face and RFL work with ICRC RFL colleagues in Afghanistan 21st July. Link to the video: [LINK](#)
- Webinar: Ensuring migrants' access to basic services: Lessons learned from RCRC action
- Workshop with Migration Directorate on Human Rights and Exercise of Police Powers - Focus on Migration
- Protection Working Group Meeting - National Society Capacity Exchange and Enhancement Platform Project
- Training: "Protection of the rights of migrants and asylum seekers" - IOM

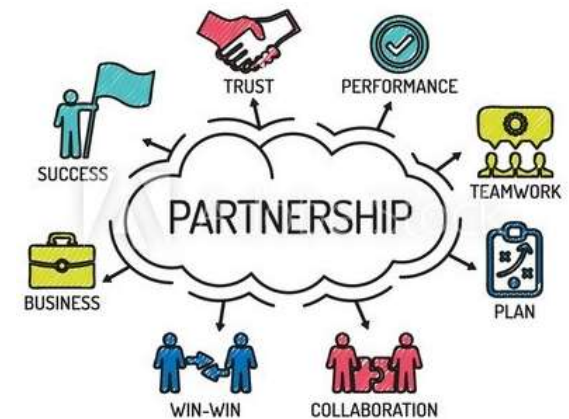




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- Revision of NA
 - Identification of potential new target groups
 - Identification and recognitions of partnership opportunities
 - Cross-cutting themes
- Development of volunteers' network
 - Focus on cities with influx also diasporas (to recruit volunteers from them)
- Branding, promotion and communication
 - Strengthening the visibility and positive effects of RFL-work on the field and on also of the digital presence





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Development of Introductory RFL-Training program for existing staff and volunteers. Including a new model PSS in multicultural context.

- Update of the existing RFL-operational manual for field workers and distribution to all regional branches (Including RFL forms and templates)
- Training and provision of working materials of a minimum 28 RFL volunteers (minimum 1 per region preferably current members of DM)
- Mentoring and guidance during work with RFL cases, including facilitation of contacts with the local authorities.

Improving the cooperation with state authorities and non-state actors

- New cooperation Agreements with SAR, Migration, Mol, ect.
- 1 round table with relevant state authorities (RFL combined with Protection)
- Meetings with other NGOs dealing with migrants, children & women, human rights and legal advice, etc. to improve cooperation.

Raising awareness on RFL among population and potential users of RFL services

- Branding and promotion activities through stickers, leaflets, flyers, brochures disseminated among migrant diaspora and refugee centres, information sessions with migrant organizations, etc.
- Regular informative and promotional publications on RFL in Facebook, Instagram and other social media, as well as in the BRC website.
- Promotion of the TTF Global platform and daily managing active RFL cases online.

Effective operational communication and cooperation with international partners

- Participation in RFL RIC meeting, organized by the ICRC
- Participation in online and face-to-face TTF meetings, organized by the ICRC
- Participation in RFL trainings for practitioners in the field, organized by the ICRC
- Co-organisation and participation in RFL trainings jointly organized by sister NSs
- International meeting on RFL & Communication (a new proposal, currently discussed with ICRC)



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THANKYOU !

QUESTIONS?