

**ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND**

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Project title:**BG65AMNP001-1.006-0002-C01 „Provision of Social and Psychological Support to Asylum-Seekers in Bulgaria, Including Identification of and Support to Vulnerable Groups“**

The project is funded by the National Program of Bulgaria under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2014-2020 with the financial support of the European Union and the budget of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Overall objective of the project: within the framework of this project, IOM will provide social and psychological support during the initial phase of adaptation of persons seeking international protection, as well as identification of and support to vulnerable persons. A team of experts, comprising a psychologist, social worker and cultural mediator, will provide services at the Registration and Reception Centers (RRCs) of the State Agency for Refugees (SAR) in Banya, Harmanli, Pastrogor and Sofia and in IOM's offices. In order to improve coordination and communication with the Bulgarian institutions, the consulting team will be supported by experts who will assist in the planning and scheduling of consultations, liaison with institutions and accessing healthcare and social services.

During the initial adaptation phase, the project experts will carry out an initial assessment of the vulnerability of persons seeking international protection housed in the RRCs and in external accommodations, to be followed by subsequent individual consultations (psychological and/or social) and support for accessing services. Psychological counseling will address emotional issues such as anxiety, lack of motivation, apathy, dissatisfaction with the outcome and/or delay of administrative and/or legal proceedings, as well as crisis interventions, supporting SAR in the preparation of psychological evaluations, risk assessments and/or best interest of the child assessments and working with vulnerable persons. Social work under the project will address difficulties with access to social and healthcare services, lack of familiarity with the social and/or administrative framework, childcare assistance, support for vulnerable people, incl. unaccompanied minors. The experts will be supported by a cultural mediator, who will facilitate communication with third-country nationals and will work to overcome social and cultural differences and help build trust. A team of interpreters from rare languages will support the work process. Part of the work will also include referencing other services provided by IOM and/or organizations.

It is anticipated that a minimum of 1,500 persons seeking international protection will receive social and psychological assistance for the purposes of improving their access to services during the initial adaptation phase, based on a vulnerability assessment.

The **main objective** of the project proposal is:

- Providing social and psychological support to persons seeking international protection in the initial adaptation phase, with special attention being paid to the needs of vulnerable persons under Directive 2008/115/EC.

The **specific objectives** of the project proposal are:

- Providing psychological and social consultations supported by a cultural mediator during the initial adaptation phase of persons seeking international protection in Bulgaria;

- Carrying out initial vulnerability assessment, identification of vulnerable persons and provision of targeted social and psychological support;
- Providing interpretation and translation services (oral and written).

Special attention will be paid to the support of minors and unaccompanied minors, taking into account their specific needs and the need for specialized assistance.

All project activities will be implemented in strict compliance with the principle of human treatment, observing the rights and respecting the dignity of persons seeking international protection.

Start date: 11.10.2017

End date: 11.10.2021

Term of implementation: 48 months