



Co-funded by
the European Union

ASYLUM MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND

This document is created with the financial support of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund co-funded by the European Union. The International Organization for Migration is entirely responsible for the content of this document and under no circumstances can it be assumed that this document reflects the official opinion of the European Union and the Responsible Authority.



PROJECT TITLE:

Support for unaccompanied minors accommodated in Safe Zones

The project is funded by the National Program of Bulgaria under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund 2021-2027 with the financial support of the European Union and the budget of the Republic of Bulgaria.

The **overall objective** of the project is to contribute to improving the provision of comprehensive care and support to unaccompanied minors (UAMs) in Bulgaria. As a result of the project's implementation, the response of the national reception system to the needs of UAMs residing in the IOM-run Safe zones in Sofia RRCs will be improved, while the UAMs will have access to secure and safe accommodation in a protective environment, as well as tailored individual support and well-being interventions. The latter two **outputs** will lead to the **outcome** of improving the response of the national reception system by providing support to the Government of Bulgaria to adhere to its obligations under EU asylum laws regarding the reception of UAMs in the country. Specifically, UAMs will be accommodated in facilities that are adapted to their needs and will receive support to address their individual needs.

The above-mentioned objective, outcome and outputs will be achieved through the continued functioning of the two IOM-run Safe Zones for UAMs located within the State Agency for Refugees' (SAR) Registration and Reception Centers (RRCs) in Sofia – Voenna Rampa and Ovcha Kupel, where IOM will provide support and accommodation, as well as access to the IOM protection programme (social, legal, administrative, and psychological consultations, linguistic and cultural mediation, and support in accessing social and health services). These zones will function as safe spaces where IOM's social workers, in coordination with SAR and other organisations, can provide targeted support to each child in accordance with their identified needs and, in general, ensure that the children receive whatever type of assistance they need in a protective environment, conducive to their development.

Project activities

To ensure safe and protective environment, IOM Bulgaria proposes to implement the following activities, as a continuation of previous actions and projects:

Protection services:

- Provide 24/7 care and support to UAMs in the two Safe Zones in Sofia, including registration and accommodation.
- Provide 24/7 physical security through a service provider in the two Safe Zones.
- Carry out individual and group social, psychological, and legal consultations.

- Provide support in accessing the Bulgarian health system, including purchase of medication and payment for exams and medical interventions, and accompany UAMs to medical and dental facilities.
- Organise information sessions to facilitate the initial adaptation of UAMs to their new environment.
- Maintain a pool of interpreters and cultural mediators who provide 24/7 services to IOM staff and UAMs in the two Safe zones.
- Organise informal education, sports, psychosocial, art, and other recreational activities in the two zones and implement a bonus point system to motivate the UAMs participation therein.
- Distribute non-food items (NFIs), such as clothes, shoes, and hygiene kits, based on identified needs.
- Support UAMs attending school with registration, maintaining contact with their teachers, and assisting them with homework and improving their Bulgarian language skills.
- Organise outreach activities, including sports tournaments, graffiti festival and excursions to historical, nature and cultural sites.
- Organise community meetings with the UAMs, at least once per month.
- Implement psychosocial interventions in the two Safe Zones through service providers.
- Organise internal training for the project implementation team.

Maintenance and repair of the infrastructure and facilities

- Carry out small repairs and renovation works based on identified needs and ensure good overall care and maintenance of the infrastructure of the zones.
- Purchase / replace materials, furniture, and equipment.

Coordination

- Carry out daily / weekly meetings with SAR RRC management, social workers, interviewers, and other relevant staff.
- Maintain daily contact with the legal representatives of the UAMs regarding administrative, legal, and social issues concerning the children.
- Coordinate and ensure complementarity with other partners, including as regards the Dublin family reunification procedure, access to the health and education systems.

Communication and publicity

- Design and produce information and publicity materials to be disseminated to beneficiaries, project staff and partner organisations.
- Publish information on the project results and support available on social media and IOM Bulgaria's website.
- Organise a project opening and project closing event.

Start date: 02.09.2024

End date: 01.03.2027

Term of implementation: 30 months