

# Resettlement and humanitarian admission - Bulgaria

## Overview

## Relevant EU legislation

Bulgaria is bound by the Union Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Framework Regulation (URF) and applies its provisions directly.

## National legislation

01/12/2002: ЗАКОН ЗА УБЕЖИЩЕТО И БЕЖАНЦИТЕ | [Amended Law on Asylum and Refugees](#)

Постановление № 144 от 19 юли 2017 г. за приемане на Наредба за условията и реда за сключване, изпълнение и прекратяване на споразумението за интеграция на чужденците с предоставено убежище или международна закрила | [Decree No 144 of 19 July 2017 on the adoption of an Ordinance on the conditions and procedure for concluding, implementing and terminating the agreement for the integration of foreigners granted asylum or international protection](#)

Framework of a National Mechanism for the Implementation of the Commitments of the Republic of Bulgaria on Resettlement - [Decree No 226 of September 10, 2019](#)

[Decision No 263 of 12 April 2016](#) on approving a framework of a National Mechanism for the Implementation of the Commitments of the Republic of Bulgaria on Resettlement Framework of the National Mechanism for the Implementation of the Commitments of the Republic of Bulgaria on Resettlement

[Decision No 467 of 21 August 2017](#)

## Competent authority and stakeholders

<p><b>Authorities responsible for establishing resettlement and humanitarian admission policy</b></p>	<p><a href="#">National Council on Migration and Integration Council of Ministers</a></p>
<p><b>Identification and referral of refugees for a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes</b></p>	<p><a href="#">The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)</a> State Agency for Refugees (SAR)   <a href="#">Държавна агенция за бежанците при Министерския съвет.</a></p>
<p><b>Selection of refugees for a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes</b></p>	<p><a href="#">The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)</a> The Resettlement Selection Team – including experts from the <a href="#">State Agency for Refugees</a>, the State Agency for National Security, the Ministry of Interior and interpreters</p>
<p><b>Pre-departure assistance a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes</b></p>	<p>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</p>
<p><b>Travel arrangements a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes</b></p>	<p>State Agency for Refugees (SAR)   <a href="#">Държавна агенция за бежанците при Министерския съвет.</a></p>
<p><b>Arrival and reception a) resettlement programmes b) humanitarian admission programmes c) community sponsorship programmes</b></p>	<p>State Agency for Refugees (SAR)   <a href="#">Държавна агенция за бежанците при Министерския съвет.</a></p>

## Programmes currently in place

The resettlement programme is based on an annual quota within the framework of the European Resettlement Programme.

## National quotas on resettlement and humanitarian admission

### National commitments for resettlement, humanitarian admission and emergency quota

2-year Union Plan	National commitment for resettlement	National commitment for humanitarian admissions	Emergency quota
Period 2024-2025	100 refugees	0	0
Period 2026-2027	There are currently no further commitments for resettlement.	n/a	n/a
Period 2028-2029	n/a	n/a	n/a

## Procedural and practical arrangements

### The admission procedure

The State Agency for Refugees (SAR) with the Council of Ministers is the national contact point and it is assisted by two liaison officers. UNHCR has a key role in the procedure, and following interviews with possible refugees to be resettled in Bulgaria, UNHCR sends files to the national contact point, SAR. SAR sets up a [team for the selection](#), sends a list of the people approved for admission to the resettlement scheme to the UNHCR representation, and further coordinates the transfer process.

Assisted by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the [selection team](#) reviews the files from UNHCR and performs the necessary identity and security checks. An opinion from the State Agency for National Security is requested. Experts from the selection team participate in the

identification and selection of refugees, and writes a report with the proposals. The assessment of the applications is the same as the national procedure for the examination of asylum applications.

## Type of protection granted and residence permit issued after the admission procedure

Resettled refugees may receive refugee status or subsidiary protection, as provided by the Law on Asylum and Refugees.

## Pre-departure assistance

The State Agency for Refugees (SAR) is responsible for conducting the procedure for international protection, including the registration of the application, issuing temporary documents to applicants and ensuring suitable accommodation, food and medical care upon arrival in Bulgaria.

Before the departure, UNHCR provides refugee with written information on their rights and obligations in Bulgaria, as well as general information about the country and its community.

Prior to the transfer, the admitted persons for resettlement must undergo a [medical examination](#). This is done immediately prior to departure and the fit-to-fly check includes a visual inspection, temperature measurement and an additional vulnerability assessment for vulnerable refugees (elderly people, pregnant women, young children, migrants with a visible illness or disability).

With help from the EUAA RSF team, SAR organises pre-departure orientation meetings with the selected refugees. Information on Bulgaria as a resettlement country is presented. The refugees have the opportunity to ask questions and receive information they need. A representative from municipalities can also be present to provide information.

## Travel arrangements

A [Certificate of Return](#) to Bulgaria must be issued by the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in Ankara, Türkiye or at any Bulgarian embassy or consulate, for example in Istanbul, pursuant to Article 59(6) of the Bulgarian Personal Documents Act. The transfer of admitted people by airplane is organised as soon as possible, in cooperation with the transfer partner.

The national contact point, SAR, jointly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, organises and coordinates the transfer. SAR informs the border police and the Ministry of the Interior about the date, time and the border-crossing point of the admitted persons entering Bulgaria, as well as the respective unit of the Ministry of Interior about [their route to their final destination](#) – the SAR reception centre.

## Arrival and reception

Upon arrival in Bulgaria, the admitted persons are taken over by SAR officers and accompanied by a team from the Ministry of the Interior, along a pre-announced route to their final destination. The admitted persons are first accommodated in a SAR territorial reception centre, up to 3 months until the administrative procedure is completed. They are registered in the reception centre as asylum seekers and have [their determination procedure conducted under the Law on Asylum and Refugees](#).

Within the reception centres, admitted persons have access to a variety of activities, including social assistance, health, psychological assistance, Bulgarian language courses, employment-related consultations and cultural orientation.

After receiving refugee or subsidiary protection status, they will receive support from the host municipality, including education, housing, healthcare and access to employment.

## Integration support to resettled and admitted refugees

Integration agreements are concluded with each resettled refugee. For example, following the resettlement of nine Syrians in 2023, [integration agreements](#) were concluded and included a package of integration measures in accordance with the [Decree No 144 of 19 July 2017 on the adoption of an Ordinance on the conditions and procedure for concluding, implementing and terminating the agreement for the integration of foreigners granted asylum or international protection](#).

## Resettlement programmes

In 2023 by Decision No 719/05.10.2023, the Council of Ministers approved the resettlement of 50 citizens of third countries or stateless persons in 2023, meeting the criterion of Syrian refugees in the region and more specifically from the Republic of Türkiye.

For the implementation of Decision No 719, Bulgaria joined the resettlement mechanism, and nine Syrian citizens were resettled from the Republic of Türkiye. The decisions of the Chairman of SAR under the Council of Ministers to grant humanitarian status were delivered on 24 and 30 January 2024.

Integration agreements were concluded with both families, which included a package of integration measures in accordance with the [Decree No 144 of 19 July 2017 on the adoption of an Ordinance on the conditions and procedure for concluding, implementing and terminating the agreement for the integration of foreigners granted asylum or international protection.](#)

The national resettlement programme is in place to resettle [100 refugees](#) over 2024-2025. The Council of Ministers approved that Bulgaria should admit, under the resettlement programme, 50 Syrian refugees from Türkiye for 2024, as well as for 2025. In December 2024, 11 Syrian nationals were resettled and have been granted subsidiary protection in 2025. For 2025, Bulgaria is yet to resettle Syrian nationals from Türkiye. The selection team is currently examining files of candidates.

## Complementary pathways

### Community sponsorship schemes related to state-led resettlement programmes

Bulgaria does not have any complementary sponsorship schemes.

### Community sponsorship schemes linked to civil society-led humanitarian admission programmes

Bulgaria does not have any complementary sponsorship schemes.

### Community sponsorship schemes linked to other complementary pathways

Bulgaria does not have any complementary sponsorship schemes.