

## Bulgaria Country Profile

### 1. Key Statistics

	2015	2016	2017
Asylum Seekers	20 391	19418	3700
Refugees	5 597	1 351	1 704
Migrants (Third Country Nationals) with valid residence permits	N/A	N/A	N/A
Irregular migrants	N/A	N/A	N/A
Relevant link	<a href="https://www.oref.government.bg/index.php/bg/aktualna-informacia-i-spravki">https://www.oref.government.bg/index.php/bg/aktualna-informacia-i-spravki</a>		

### The most prominent nationalities among migrants/refugees in Bulgaria:

- 1) Afghanistan; 2) Syria; 3) Iraq; 4) Pakistan.

### 2. Priority Health Conditions

#### The main challenges in terms of healthcare access and/or health issues of migrants/refugees identified are:

**Serious language barrier.** For Arabic and Kurdish, the problem is almost solved, but with the rare languages – Farsi and Pashtun, there are still difficulties.

**Short stay in the country.** During the stay at the refugee centers, until receiving refugee status, all are insured at the expense of the state budget. After receiving refugee status and leaving the refugee centers, the refugees have to find work in order to be health insured. However, due to their short stay in Bulgaria, this rarely a case.

**Medical supplies for refugees who received refugee status.** Upon receiving refugee status, medications for uninsured persons are at their expense. This is a problem especially for elderly and chronically ill refugees.

**Need for prolonged health, social and cultural mediation.**

### 3. Legislation Description

#### Brief description of the legislation concerning access to health care for migrants/refugees

According to Bulgarian law, foreigners who are in process of granting international protection have the right to health insurance, accessible medical care, free use of medical care under the conditions and procedure for the Bulgarian citizens.

Their rights are guaranteed in Art. 40, par. 3, item 7 of the Health Insurance Act (330). They shall be provided at the expense of the republican budget, unless they are insured by the order of par. 1: persons in proceedings for granting refugee or asylum right.

The medical examination of persons seeking international protection shall be carried out in the health offices of the Territorial Units of the State Agency for Refugees at the Council of Ministers and the following activities shall be carried out:

- initial investigations when registering applicants for protection;
- continuous medical supervision;
- first aid;
- Control of the hygiene status of the persons;
- ongoing control of compliance with hygiene requirements;
- preparation and maintenance of medical records for each person.

Social experts at the State Agency for Refugees at the Council of Ministers support access to healthcare for persons seeking international protection by: advising persons on health issues; record them to a GP; accompany the persons to hospitals; issue official notes to National revenue agency for health insured persons, etc.