BULGARIAN COUNCIL ON REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

ADVOCACY FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND BULGARIAN LANGUAGE TRAINING FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

Photo: UNHCR

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The Bulgarian Council on Refugees and Migrants (BCRM) was founded in 2005 by the Bulgarian Red Cross, the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee and Caritas-Bulgaria as a platform of their activities related refugee and migration policy, protection and integration of refugees and migrants.

The BCRM, as an association of organizations of longstanding experience and professional competency has the capacity to influence and support the social transformation towards efficient protection and integration of refugees and migrants.
The education of refugee children has been priority in the advocacy interventions of the Council.

After formulating the strategy, the Council intensified the advocacy interventions (meetings, seminars, expert sessions, conferences and participation in relevant events, organized in the field of education and refugee and migrant issues.)
The 4 advocacy papers published, developed as a result of research, analyses, formulating challenges and solutions to advocate for, had education of refugee children in school age as an important component.
2011: *Thematic Session on Education of Refugees*

2012: *National conference on Integration*

2013: *Meeting of the Academia Refugee Studies Initiative in Bulgaria network*

2014: *Seminar with international participation on provision of specialized training for future teachers of Bulgarian to refugee children*

2015: *Advocacy Workshop on Access to Education and Bulgarian Language Training for Beneficiaries of International Protection in Bulgaria*

2016: *Advocacy Expert Meeting on Access to Education, Bulgarian Language Learning, and Vocational Training of Beneficiaries of International Protection;*
The focus of the Council advocacy was moved from the political level at presidency and ministerial level, to the municipal level.

The Council started to organized reach-out meeting and dialogues with relevant stakeholders in municipalities, including regional educational authorities and academia.

The education of asylum seeking and refugee children is a priority issue of all advocacy interventions.
Development of rules and regulations on the terms and conditions for admission of refugee children, or children with humanitarian status to school.

Development of standardized criteria for assessing the level of children`s knowledge in compliance with the Bulgarian educational system.

Extra training in Bulgarian language for children of refugees to be included in the school curriculum. Provide for additional training in the specific terminology of different school subjects.

Dialogue between teachers, school boards, and parents of refugee children for faster and effective training.

Training for teachers how to work in multicultural environment and get knowledge of the culture and the traditions of the children`s country of origin.
Additional financial support to families, whose children attend kindergartens or schools.

Raising public awareness and in particular that of the students and teachers on the rights of the children’s of the refugees

Intensive training courses in Bulgarian language and for additional assistance on school subject to unaccompanied children placed in the institutions

Alternative forms of care provided for unaccompanied minors

Bulgarian language courses for women refugees and asylum seekers taking into account their specific traditions and different nature
The adoption of an Ordinance №3 on the terms and procedure for the enrollment and education of asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection adopted in April 2017 by the Ministry of the Education and Science
The adoption of an ordinance № 6 on learning the Bulgarian literacy language, which includes provision for additional Bulgarian language training at schools for asylum seekers or BIPs at school age.
The school principal in the village of Ivanovo accepts refugee children at the school and finds a way to integrate them through the Bulgarian traditions and folklore. In this way Bulgarian children and refugees become friends who enjoy every moment at school.
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THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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