



**CONCORDIA Bulgaria
Foundation**

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



**Whoever saves one life,
saves the whole world!**

CONCORDIA is an international, independent aid organization dedicated to helping children, adolescents and families in need by encouraging them to have a more independent and responsible way of life.

CONCORDIA goes where the need is greatest. And where others do not go.

CONCORDIA seeks individual solutions for children, adolescents and their families.

CONCORDIA never gives up on anyone who we support.

CONCORDIA believes in the humanity principles and the Christian values. We are tolerant and open to other cultures and religions.





Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends,

The year 2021 marked the 30th anniversary of CONCORDIA Social Projects.

30 years ago, CONCORDIA Social Projects was founded to give a home to the many children left to fend for themselves on the streets of Bucharest. Today, CONCORDIA is an international children's aid organisation with a multifaceted programme, active in 7 countries – in Romania, the Republic of Moldova, Bulgaria, Austria, Germany, and since 2021 in Switzerland and Kosovo.

Through our programme and our five pathways of change we want to make a long-term impact and a better future possible for children and young people. CONCORDIA is committed to upholding children's rights and fights for every child to have the chance of a self-determined life out of marginalisation.

The year 2021 was also very much characterised by the Covid pandemic, which has continued to take lives and has caused even more hardship and misery for the most vulnerable. The aftermath of the pandemic, the increase in domestic violence and the regression in access to education cannot be overestimated. CONCORDIA is responding to this situation and has expanded its programme for child victims of domestic violence and day care for children from difficult family backgrounds.

However, the pandemic is not the only crisis. We continue to face increasing uncertainties, climate change and conflicts that erode the resilience of the most vulnerable. As we move forward, we must meet these new challenges while keeping stride with those we know too well already.

As the CONCORDIA board, we would like to say thank you once again to all our supporters for sharing the fellowship with us! To our reliable staff, for whom 2021 was another year in a state of emergency!

We hope that you will join us on yet another stage of our way to a better future.

In gratitude for your active assistance and trust,



Ulla Konrad
Chairwoman of
the International
Board of Directors



Pater Markus Inama, SJ
Member of
the Board of Directors



Bernhard Drumel
Managing
chairman



Thomas Birtel
Member of
the Board of Directors



The past year of 2021 was another hard year for our society. In CONCORDIA Bulgaria we were again able to celebrate our good results despite all the hardships.

We are happy that we were able to achieve an important strategic goal to expand our activities outside of the city of Sofia. We opened the CONCORDIA Family center in the village of Malki Iskar through which we support the most vulnerable not only in the village itself but in other areas of the Etropole municipality. One of our special moments in 2021 was the start of our podcast Social speak in which we discuss important social issues together with experts and people from the vulnerable groups we support.

We are thankful and honored that this year we received several achievement awards for our work. Among them are the National alliance for social responsibility Grand award for overall contribution in social development in Bulgaria and the Best business plan award for our CONCORDIA Atelier from the Let's go program of the Bulgarian center for non-profit law.

The year was marked by celebrations of CONCORDIA Social project's 30-year anniversary in which we participated with different initiatives and activities.

We are again grateful for our partners and donors who became even more in 2021. I am personally thankful for my colleagues and their dedication because it would be impossible to support so many people in need without them. We continue onward with many new ideas on helping people to overcome difficulty and improve their lives.



Stela Gachevska
Executive director



Nº	SOCIAL SERVICE	OPENING YEAR	CURRENT CAPACITY	SERVICE USERS IN 2021
1.	Youth complex Hello	2008	13+2	264
2.	Youth house Timok	2009	4	5
3.	Youth house Ropotamo	2009	8	9
4.	Family center Posoka	2009	25	42
5.	Outreach social work Give a hand	2009	-	1402
6.	CONCORDIA Hairdresser's salon	2010	4	1
7.	CONCORDIA Children's house	2014	10	10
8.	CONCORDIA Atelier	2015	3	13
9.	CONCORDIA Football club	2015	-	95
10.	Center for children and families Zaharna Fabrika	2017	50	93
11.	Shelter for children victims of abuse Light	2019	12	18
12.	CONCORDIA Family center Malki Iskar	2021	60	118



Our podcast Social speak already has 6 episodes, 11 guests and was listened to 462 times

Our new climbing wall in Family center Posoka has 3 routes and 82 grips

Over 80 guests visited the opening of CONCORDIA Family center in Malki Iskar

We showed you 656 pictures of our activities on our Facebook page and our followers grew by 453 people

Our mobile room for consultations and field work support has traveled 1639 kilometers

CONCORDIA Atelier fulfilled our biggest corporate orders to date of 2200 candles and 650 ceramic mugs

Over 1300 haircuts were done in the CONCORDIA Hairdresser's salon

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GET TO LIVE A SELF-DETERMINED LIFE, FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION!

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
HAVE A HIGHER SOCIAL AND
EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
HAVE MORE SUPPORTIVE
NETWORKS AND RELATIONSHIPS

YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE
SUFFICIENT INCOME
AND RESOURCES

GREATER SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY
AND INCLUSION



YOUTH COMPLEX HELLO

Youth complex Hello provides consultative support and covers basic needs such as shelter and food for youths up to 35 years old who are facing temporary difficulties in life. Our social workers consult the youths on various topics of finding work and sustaining their work life; we provide psychological support to the youths for dealing with their current situation and assist them with representation in front of other public institutions. In our work with the adolescents we strive to give them the skills they need to live independently without relying on social assistance permanently.

Youth complex Hello continued working without any interruptions throughout the whole year despite the difficulties around the COVID-19 situation. We accepted universal admission rules and we encouraged the youths to complete their vaccination courses. This helped us to avoid any infections among the service

users and our social workers and allowed us to restart in full the **Open doors initiative**. We are happy that youths in need again have access to a warm bath, homemade dinner in our kitchen, information and consultations on important topics.

Throughout the year we strengthened our partnership with several refugee organizations due to more and more common issues which require our collaborative efforts. Additionally, we constantly work with the adolescents and encourage them to participate in trainings. In 2021 we held several trainings on finding and keeping work and overcoming mental challenges in work life in our project **3, 2, 1 – Work is fun! – Social inclusion of youths at risk through professional integration**. 35 youths developed their skills in the trainings and 15 also received support from our psychologists.



264 youths supported

105 youths consulted
by social workers

87 youths sheltered

46 youths consulted
about job prospects

38 youth consulted
with a psychologist

In 2021 we met Rosen – a shy but lively youngster with a chronic illness which limits severely the type of work he can handle. Rosen was just back from working abroad but because he has no family and social network in Bulgaria, he found himself homeless. We provided him with a place to live in **Youth complex Hello** and started working hard with him on overcoming the difficulties he was facing. We slowly re-established his health insurance, found a general practitioner and specialists to help him with his

diagnosis, purchased the medications he needs and found a sustainable solution for long-term therapy. During the entire process sometimes, we would lose contact with him and he would leave scared from the road ahead, however, every time our social workers managed to convince him to not give up. Today we are happy that we supported Rosen. He was successful in finding a job abroad and now leads an independent and happy life!

YOUTH HOUSE TIMOK

Youth house Timok is our social service for adolescents ages 18 to 35 who have the ability to be independent but still require temporary support. For **CONCORDIA Bulgaria** this support takes the form of an apartment in Sofia where the youths can stay for a period of 1 year and consult with our social workers as needed. On top of assisting with the practical things in life like taking care your home, paying the bills,

care of physical and mental health, creating and sustaining healthy relationships, our staff is ready to support the youths in need with important issues for their independency like having a permanent job, finance management, setting and achieving goals and many more. Throughout the year in **Youth house Timok** we supported 5 adolescents through their path on to a successful self-sufficient life.



In 2021 young Filip found the support he needed in **Youth house Timok**. He came to us without a place to live but with a musical instrument in hand as music is not only a hobby for him, but it is his profession. Having found himself facing severe adversity after his life was spent in different social institutions, he had no one to turn to – not even his own family. As early as the first conversation with our social workers Filip shared his dream of buying a caravan – his own

mobile home with which to travel around the world and bring joy to people with his music and his colorful personality. We gave Filip the opportunity to stay in **Youth house Timok** so he can find stability in his life and he did not disappoint us – he found a second job which would not interfere with his music, he has all the legal permits to play music publicly and is already saving money to make his dream a reality!

FAMILY CENTER POSOKA

In **Family center Posoka** children at risk and their families from vulnerable communities can receive support targeted at their individual needs. Various specialists work in the center and prepare individual action plans for every child. The children can rely on educational support, work with a psychologist for regular activities to improve their social and emotional capacity in order to feel good in our society. Our social workers never miss an opportunity to support the parents in caring for their children – with consultations, trainings, advocacy activities and direct community work.

In spite of the continuing restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic **Family center Posoka** remained open through the entire year and children in need kept their trust that our specialists will be there for them no matter what is happening in the world. We continued our work in cooperation with our partners who are also involved in childcare – Sofia directorate of the Ministry

of Interior affairs, Child protection services, 59th School Vasil Levski. We worked in collaboration with KO-OP co-working and art space to implement the Romani paramisi project through which children in need had the opportunity to express themselves creatively.

In addition to our social services for socialization, education and empowerment, our team was able to integrate into their work new and innovative social programs. We built a special climbing wall in partnership with **Unicredit Foundation, Walltopia, Andrew Investment Group** and **Merck Foundation**.

The climbing wall is part of our overall therapy program for disadvantaged kids with psychomotor difficulties that is available in the family center. By helping them climb the wall, we help them overcome obstacles and believe in their abilities to keep going further and further in their personal development!

FAMILY CENTER POSOKA IS A DELEGATED SERVICE BY AGREEMENT WITH SOFIA MUNICIPALITY.



42

 children supported

100+ consultations with parents

40 children received educational support

15 birthdays celebrated

38 children received psychological support

In 2021 almost every day we supported Katya and her mother. In the beginning Katya was cold towards us even though we were trying to help her with some basics. Katya's mother had to keep her company in school because she was unable to study for more than 1-2 school classes, Katya was unable to focus on her activities, she was constantly hitting and slamming doors and was even unable to pour herself a glass of water. Our staff worked together with Katya and her mother to improve their relationship, to create healthy

communication boundaries and to improve on their abilities to adapt in new environments. With our help Katya was able to start going to a specialized school where she feels significantly more relaxed and started improving. Katya also took part in our new climbing program and has made startling progress. Today our efforts are rewarded by the fact that Katya is able to eat by herself, clean up the table, goes to school on her own for the whole day and is able to climb our wall!

CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ZAHARNA FABRIKA

Center for children and families Zaharna Fabrika supports people from disadvantaged groups facing different types of difficulties – life in extreme poverty, with mild to moderate disabilities, are at risk or have already been excluded from the health, education and social systems. We always look at their needs as a whole because such complex issues require the joint efforts of all specialists working in the center. With us children and families can receive consultations on improving their life from an educator, psychologist, speech therapist and health professionals.

For a second year in a row our work was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, however this has not limited our activities in any way. Families in need can always receive the information they need and the possibility to better their life through distance support or on the spot consultations. Even people living in other neighborhoods continued to seek our support because we did not give up and are always ready to provide them

with the security and support they would seldom find elsewhere.

Throughout the year we organized different experience activities aimed at helping the children understand life outside of the isolated and marginalized environments. We arranged a trip to **Alis Petting Zoo** where the children got to enjoy time with unknown and interesting animal species. Another favorite activity for the children is the **Do-It-Yourself** workshop where kids together with the team are creating things and talking about the important things in life. Some days we learn how to make pancakes and at the same time talk about friendship and what it means to have and to be a true friend. Other days we draw together and while we develop or sense of aesthetics, we learn how to communicate safely on the internet. And the children's drawings are proudly displayed in the center where our guests can also enjoy them!

CENTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ZAHARNA FABRIKA IS A DELEGATED SERVICE BY AGREEMENT WITH SOFIA MUNICIPALITY.



90

 people supported

300+ consultations with educator and speech therapist

35 children participated in daytrips

20 children taken on excursions

0 children taken out of their families

In our mission to never give up on the people who come to us we continued to support the 11-year old Pavel and his family in 2021. When his mother first got in touch with us he was an anxious, angry young boy who has recently lost his adoptive father. Although his mother had been taking care of his needs and was paying a lot of attention to him, the loss of his father had made him feel resentful towards the entire world. Our long-term engagement and work with him, his mother and sister however has given results.

During games and consultations with our psychologist, speech therapist and educator he learns that he can count on us and that he is indeed able to find friendship among his schoolmates and to take part in education at school. Although today he still faces some difficulty in education, his mother is very happy to share that working with our specialists has made him a happier child, who we are ready to continue supporting!



CONCORDIA FAMILY CENTER IN THE VILLAGE OF MALKI ISKAR

CONCORDIA Family center in the village of Malki Iskar is the newest social service of CONCORDIA Bulgaria foundation which opened its doors for people in need in June 2021. In the center people living in extreme hardship can find holistic support for their needs – they can receive clothing, food and shoes, advice from our nurse about their health, information from the social worker on how to improve their life and they can make sure that their child can work with an educator to help with education deficits. By opening this support center away from highways and the big city in a village that no longer even has a school, we guarantee that we indeed go where others do not go and reach people forgotten by everyone else.

From the first day of operation the team of **CONCORDIA Family center in Malki Iskar** started doing field work and building a trusting relationship with the families at risk in the local community. The community warmed to us quickly because we were able to reassure them that they are able to improve their life and we are there to help them with that. Every month we organized different activities to socialize the children like summer cinema, sports games, a football tournament, flash mob dancing and gift-giving for Christmas! Our relationship with the community was helped by the partnerships with several schools in the municipality, **Ellatzite-Med AD** and **Chipita Bulgaria**, who help us support children and families in need in the area.



85 children visit the center

2065 clothing items given out

380 medicines provided to people in need

200+ consultations and primary health examinations provided by our nurse

39 children regularly receive educational support

Shortly before opening the center during a visit from our colleagues from Austria we spontaneously decided to make an introductory field visit in order to meet people from the community and vice versa. This visit led us to the neighborhood at the very end of the village where we saw 7 kids completely alone in a rundown village house without windows or doors. The few clothing items they had were completely inappropriate for the weather, torn and dirty, and in the children's eyes we could see fear, sadness, and

a plea for help. After seeing the children, we immediately got in touch with their mother who was more than happy to receive our help. Today the children live in another house in the village with more suitable conditions, they come to take a bath and eat at the center, go to school regularly and the team of **CONCORDIA Family center in Malki Iskar** regularly visits the mother in case additional support is needed!

CONCORDIA CHILDREN'S HOUSE

CONCORDIA Children's house is our cozy 3 floor house where we take care of children up to 14 years old who are unable to live with their biological families. We provide them with safety and security and a team of specialists makes sure every day that the children are growing in an inclusive and family-like environment. The support we give to the 10 children that have used the service in 2021 is holistic – from the cleanliness and warmth of their room to going to school or the doctor, developing their individual talents and preparing them for an independent life.

The life of the children in **CONCORDIA Children's house** kept changing with COVID-19 guidances this year as well. Their education was provided both face-to-face and through distance learning. Our educators were able to organize both group and individual work sessions for the children's education and all of them have graduated their year and moved on without the need to pass any corrective exams. At the same time in accordance

with all health recommendations the children took part in our joint project Romani paramisi with KO-OP. In it the children were introduced to the artwork of famous artists and even recreated some of their creations. In the children's free time we arranged for them trips to the seaside and the mountain where the children were able to get accustomed to societal rules, how to behave outside of their home, how to organize their free time and of course – how to have fun.

The life of the children is constantly supported by the presence of the adults who are taking care of them. From the social workers who create the long-term and daily action plan for each child, through the psychologist who helps them solve their personal problems or conflicts with other people, to all of the caretakers who take care of the children's hygiene, health and prosperity. All of this is only possible thanks to the donations of individuals and of companies for the children in **CONCORDIA Children's house**.



10 children using the services

96 group consultations with a psychologist

48 art activities with an art specialist

32 individual consultations

7 children participated in excursions and educational experiences outside of the house

In 2021 the team of **CONCORDIA Children's house** was focused on the upcoming service exit of the 18-year old Hary. He started an internship at CONCORDIA Atelier which helped him to gain basic independence skills – waking up on time for the job, using public transport, managing his own financial and time resources and how to make friends with people his age outside of the house. Slowly the team gave Hary even

more responsibilities – taking care of his space on his own, cleaning, using the laundry machine and buying food for the entire household. We helped him with job seeking and looking for suitable housing. We are happy to have helped Hary on his way to adulthood but we still keep in touch with him so we can make sure he can always receive the right type of support at the right time.

Youth house Ropotamo is a residential service for youths at risk ages 14 to 18 for whom it is not possible to be taken care of by their families. There are 8 places for the adolescents in a family house in Sofia where a team of specialists takes care that they receive everything they need in order to grow up – a home, security, education, an adult with which to share their problems and support them when they face problems or difficulties. At the moment there are 4 boys and 2 girls at the house and 2 other youths have already taken on their independent path.

Throughout the year our work with the youths was mainly focused on developing the skills they need in order to become independent. In partnership with several organizations like **Junior Achievement Bulgaria, the Bulgarian Red Cross** and **Caritas Bulgaria** the youths took part in different trainings and focus groups where they could freely discuss the topics that interest them like finding a job, their education or even topics related to their personal development. In the summer we arranged for them an educational trip as part of our **Wings4Youth** project activities where they had training sessions and practical exercises out in nature on their self-sufficient life.



In 2021 the team at the house continues their hard work on improving the life of Julia. She might be only 16 but even this young she has already lived in 3 different countries far away from her own family. Julia leaves her homeland of Syria when the situation there becomes unbearable and first reaches Turkey which she also decides to leave behind and thus ending up in a refugee camp in Bulgaria. Her path takes her

through a lot of different institutions, but she stays permanently with **Youth house Ropotamo**. Here she finds people who support her in learning Bulgarian, help her with everyday and administrative tasks and advocate for her wellbeing. Today Julia is anxiously awaiting the moment she can start training in her chosen profession and we stand firmly behind her in the path she has chosen for herself!

Shelter with priority for children victims of abuse Light managed by **CONCORDIA Bulgaria foundation** provides protection to children victims of different forms of abuse. Besides our center being a shelter from their troubled life, in the face of our specialists the children can find security and support otherwise unavailable in their usual environments. A team of caretakers, social workers and a psychologist makes sure that every child has access to information and consultative support aimed at coping with the trauma of abuse. In 2021 we have helped 18 children and for each and every case we have taken every precaution to make their stay as pleasant as possible.

In spite of the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions we arranged diverse activities in and outside of **Shelter Light** in order to stimulate their inclusion and painless way back to normal life. The children visited museums, parks and celebrated many different holidays. For their free time our volunteers and interns – students from **Sofia University** organized for them art and cooking workshops, sport activities and the children also tried making candles in the **CONCORDIA Atelier**. Thanks to the commitment of the workers of **Shelter Light** and our good partner relations with institutions like Child protection services, hospitals, schools and other NGOs working with victims of abuse we are capable to make a better future for these children!



SHELTER WITH PRIORITY FOR CHILDREN VICTIMS OF ABUSE LIGHT IS A DELEGATED SERVICE BY AGREEMENT WITH SOFIA MUNICIPALITY.

In 2021 Monica was one of the children who luckily had a short stay in **Shelter Light**. Before being placed in the center her father breaks the relationship between her and her mother by forbidding them to communicate. Monica, however, manages to share with her mother in secret that her father has started treating her like an intimate partner and runs away from her home. Her mother reported the abuse coming from her father without hesitation and this is how

Monica starts working with our specialists. We provided a safe place away from her abuser, psychological support and consultations and the presence of our social workers to support her. During Monica's stay in the shelter we worked on rebuilding the relationship with her mother and her mother's family. After hard but much needed efforts from both sides we are happy to say that today Monica lives with her mother and is proud of herself and her achievements!

Outreach social work Give a hand is an emblematic **CONCORDIA Bulgaria** foundation social service accessible to any person in need. The people we meet here have very different fates but are the same in one aspect – each and every one of them needs support – with health, education, emotional, administrative matters or with direct material needs. Our team of specialists is ready to address any problem, to find and deliver the correct information in an understandable way, to purchase medication or food or to represent and advocate for people in disadvantage in front of different institutions.

In the past year COVID-19 continued to shape the work of our Outreach team and a larger consultative need arose. Our staff provided health support on the field and over the phone which included explanations of the most current anti-epidemic measures, what is a vaccine and how does it work and how to keep protecting our own health and that of our closest relatives. In addition, people in need have also consulted us on some of the most human of topics – how to deal with the loss of a relative, how to arrange our daily life in accordance with the current restrictions and how to lower the levels of anxiety. Besides providing care for adults, the outreach team organizes educational groups for marginalized children and we make sure that we guarantee the presence of an educator, a suitable educational program, a place to study, transportation, educational materials and even clothes, and the only thing required from the children is the drive to learn!



948 people in need supported with consultations

1320+ consultations

300+ drug prescriptions fulfilled

600+ food packages provided

70+ health procedures for family planning

In 2021 **Outreach social work Give a hand** was again asked for support by Vyara – a humble young woman of 38 who lives with her sister and doesn't have any other relatives. Vyara does not seek our help often but it is always for paramount issues and this time it was no exception. When she came to us her pain was already unbearable and the cancer had turned one of her breasts blue. Even in her condition she has been refused admittance to hospital because she has no

health insurance and barely has enough money on her to cover for her basic needs. We looked for solutions of every kind and consulted with many additional experts, but the solution was only one – restoring her health rights. Together with some of Vyara's own savings and funds from **CONCORDIA Bulgaria** foundation we were able to provide everything that Vyara would need so she could today be in remission from her chemotherapy.



In pursuing our mission to support people in need to lead a dignified and independent life we continued to develop the social business of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** in 2021. In **CONCORDIA Atelier** and in **CONCORDIA Hairdressing salon** young people in need gain invaluable experience, preparing them for our real-life work environment. This is a good opportunity for young people in disadvantaged positions to get the necessary skills for professional realization.

During their internship in the candle or in the ceramics **CONCORDIA Atelier** they can learn how to choose clothes for work, to follow their work schedule, how to behave with colleagues, how to fill-in the documents required for a paid leave, how to measure their personal success at work and, of course, to make a beautiful and high quality candle or a unique ceramic product which can bring joy to our customers. For adolescents who choose to learn the craft of hairdressing, we offer the support of a professional hairdresser to get them familiar with the subtleties of this professional activity, and, when they are ready – to finish a training for professional qualification that allows them to practice this job!

In 2021 we won the award “Best Business Plan” in the LET's Go Program of Bulgarian center for not-for-profit law – BCNL. We received the sum of 10 000 BGN for opening a physical shop of our Candle Atelier. We are glad to have the opportunity to continue to develop our social business and to help young people at risk.



7000+ candles poured
1300+ customers
in CONCORDIA
Hairdressing salon

1000+ pieces of pottery made
14 youths in need supported
1 hairdresser intern



In 2021, some of our most beautiful candles were hand poured by Rosen – a modest but honest boy, whose life so far has passed in different homes, doing heavy agricultural work, without the genuine support of his parents. He liked the job in the Candle Atelier from day one, and the rest of our employees were impressed by Rosen's desire to learn all kinds of skills – cleaning candle molds, dissolving the color pigment, pouring candles, candle wrapping and even selling them during the bazaars we organize. Today Rosen is not just our colleague. We rely entirely on him and we are glad to be able to support him on his way forward.



SPORTS IN 2021

CONCORDIA Football club is one of our social programs we are very proud of, because through sports we help the inclusion and acceptance of children and young people from isolated communities. We demand from our talents to go to school regularly, while we provide them free of charge with the opportunity to go out on the football field on par with everyone else, as officially registered players, to show off their skills, to be welcomed and greeted by the audience for their own authentic selves!

Besides the trainings with a certified football coach, with us, the members of the three football teams – Children's, Youth's and Girl's, can also receive educational support from an educator, consultation with a psychologist and help on different issues from a social worker. With all this, we are supporting the good physical and mental health of children from socially isolated communities. The result of our work is each player increases their self-assessment and confidence in their abilities to learn the skills, needed for successful integration into society and for achieving their personal goals.



100th educational session held
95 children and youths supported

80+ sessions with our psychologist
74 football games

In 2021, we had to do something that we definitely did not want to do – **CONCORDIA Football club** had to part with our longtime goalkeeper Grigor. He didn't just play football with us from the very beginning, he has guarded our football goal for 5 seasons and over 150 games. We are proud of his achievements, but even more so that when he turned 18 he decided to continue his education. Today Grigor studies to become a coach in the National Sports Academy. It was certainly difficult for us not only to part with him, but also, to find him a worthy and equally talented replacement. We are still immensely happy to have supported his application for university and that we are helping him make his dreams come true!



OPENING OF CONCORDIA FAMILY CENTER IN MALKI ISKAR

In 2021, we managed to accomplish an important strategic goal for **CONCORDIA Bulgaria foundation** – expanding the scope of our activities and reaching children and families in need outside Sofia city limits.

On June 11, 2021, in the village of Malki Iskar, Municipality of Etropole, we opened the new **CONCORDIA Family center**, which has the capacity to support 60 people. In the village of Malki Iskar, 60% of the population is poor and lives in social isolation, the situation is similar with the surrounding villages in the municipality. A high percentage of children live at risk of dropping out of school and social exclusion.

The opening of **CONCORDIA Family center** coincided with the closure of the local school, which further increases the risk to children. As soon as the center opened, the children were included in an educational support and socialization program. We also work actively with their parents on improving their parenting skills, as well as for support in finding employment. **CONCORDIA Family in Malki Iskar** also provides basic support – food, bathroom and clothes and access to medical care.

In **CONCORDIA Family center in Malki Iskar**, we have created a stable team of social experts, close to the community we will be helping. We believe that together we will succeed to do exactly what is needed. We wish our endeavor success!



The launch of the podcast **"Social speak"** is one of our special moments in 2021, because an essential part of our work is to give a voice to the problems, difficulties and needs of vulnerable people. And, with the podcast, we found the best way to make it happen. For each episode we discuss a relative social topic with disadvantaged people, experts and representatives of the state administration. We strive to show all points of view and to reach the right decisions on each of the topics

It started as a project, funded under Sofia Municipality program Social Innovations and now **Social speak podcast** is living its own life. We continue to develop and popularize it. We are pleased with the podcast's widespread resonance and we believe that Social speak is a positive endeavor on the road to a better future for our society as a whole.

Listen to us and follow us on our website www.concordia.bg, on our Facebook and LinkedIn pages, on our YouTube channel, on anchor.fm, spotify.com, Google podcasts.

WITH CLIMBING SKILLS TO NEW ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2021 we launched “With climbing skills to new achievements” – an old idea of ours, which found the right moment for realization in Family Center Posoka. It consists in the implementation of a Therapeutic Program including climbing for disadvantaged children. Finding funding and therapists was a big challenge for us. We won initial funding under the **UniCredit Bulbank's Call for Europe** program, and for the rest of the funds we thank our partners **Walltopia**, **Andrew Investment Group** and **Merck Bulgaria**, for their trust in our cause and in the power of climbing for children's development.

The program includes children from our social centers and from other partnership organizations. We are glad that we are already seeing very positive results. And for many children, climbing is something they never even imagined they would practice and it is impossible for them without such a program. Now they are climbing with great fervor while improving their self-esteem and socializing, they start believing in their abilities to step up.

The successes achieved by the Therapeutic Program sound incredible, but they are a fact for more and more children with psychomotor difficulties. Our goal is to ensure the sustainability of the program and make it a regular activity of the foundation. We will be happy to popularize it as a successful practice among other social organizations. We continue to look for like-minded people and donors to succeed together in achieving this goal of ours.



ROMANI PARAMISI

Everyone has their own story but not everyone knows how to tell it. In order to know who we are and to be able to present ourselves to others, we have to learn so many different skills. For children in need and from isolated communities, acquiring these skills is even more difficult. The joint project of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** and **KO-OP** co-working and art space – **Romani Paramisi** – gave the opportunity to the children we support to develop precisely these skills!

For several months children in need attended creative workshops, where they got acquainted with works of Lika Yanko, Vladimir Dimitrov – Maystora, Andy Warhol, Banksy, Paul Gauguin, Diego Rivera, Gustav Klimt and Raffaello Sanzio. The children learned about different styles of art, how to make compositions, what the

picture tells us and they even recreated some of the famous and emblematic works, while telling their own stories.

The project ended with an exhibition of their stories as they are told in photos of their work and in their own creations. Children from **CONCORDIA Children's House** and from **Family Center Posoka** took part in the project, and, with the help of the artists **Violeta Apostolova** and **Maya Antova** they got acquainted with the various artists in **KO-OP** co-working and art space, who provided the space and everything needed for the creative workshops, realized under the “**Socially engaged arts**” program, with the support of the **National Culture Fund**.



Iceland
Liechtenstein
Norway

Active
citizens fund

OUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In September 2021, a team of specialists in social work and inclusion of isolated communities has started work under the project “Our Rights and Responsibilities”. The project activities are planned for a period of 2 years and are focused on empowering people in need with basic literacy abilities to read and write, as well as with trainings about documents, working with institutions, exercising rights and respecting the rights of children.

The project covers not only work between our social workers, with other public institutions and people in need, but also, the creation of a manual, summarizing methods and approaches for empowering people who need of our support. Through the activities under the project, such as: direct social work, advocacy and dissemination of useful knowledge, people in need will receive adequate support and will significantly improve their life while dealing with part of the circumstances, which have so far prevented them from a dignified and independent life.

“Our Rights and Responsibilities” benefits 55 571 EUR from a grant under the Active Citizens Fund from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, through the EEA Grants – www.activecitizensfund.bg. The aim of “Our Rights and Responsibilities” project is to improve the skills of people from marginalized Roma communities in Sofia to exercise their rights. This text was created with the financial support of Active Citizens Fund Bulgaria, under the Financial mechanism of EEA, CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation bears full responsibility for the contents and under no circumstances can the contents be considered to reflect the official opinion of Financial mechanism of EEA and the operator of Active Citizens Fund Bulgaria.

„I noticed that I receive more than I give“ – says Maxi – one of our international volunteers this year. Maxi, Deborah and Johanna are three young people from Austria, completing their compulsory social service.

Maxi is the youngest and maybe that's good for him, because there is always a ready-to-play child from **Shelter Light** near him. Children and Maxi always find something interesting to do, but most often they have fun on the swings in the yard or cook together. Our other volunteer Deborah supports **CONCORDIA Children's House** and always thinks of something new for the children's daily lives. The only one that works with adults in **Youth Complex Hello** is Johanna. Although in the beginning it was difficult for her to communicate with the youths in Bulgarian, she quickly learned to make friends with young people in need and to support them and her colleagues in their daily activities by just talking to a young man or accompanying him to a doctor for moral support.

We are glad that in 2021 we continued our successful partnership with **HP – Hewlett Packard Enterprise Bulgaria**. To ensure the safety of its employees, the company adapted its volunteer program and together we managed to realize various online socially useful activities. Specialists from **HP** supported the children **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** works with by providing online foreign languages lessons, Bulgarian language and Math lessons. To make the wishes of every child in need come true, **HP** found specialists in Japanese, German, English, Spanish and Arabic. Except for the children, this year HP decided to organize online German language lessons for the employees of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation**, and the adults of both organizations have as much fun as the children. We are grateful to **HP**, because, despite all the restrictions, they seek and find ways to continue their volunteering initiatives and contribute to the development of children in need!

Thanks to all our volunteers, who take the time and effort to support our activities and strive to make people in need smile!



In **CONCORDIA Children's House** we take care of 8 children who for various reasons cannot live with their biological families and do not receive parental care.

The team of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** that helps these children consists of 9 people – 4 caretakers, 2 social workers, 1 driver, a psychologist and the manager of the social service. Their main task is to take care of the children in all aspects of their life and to assist them with their education. This is not an easy task, and when the children are not your own, the responsibility and commitment are even greater.

The team of **CONCORDIA Children's House** works together in pursuit of their shared and very responsible mission. All members of the team are big-hearted people with rich, positive life experiences. Everyone contributes with their strengths and teaches children useful things through their own personal views and experience. There are hikers in the team, teaching

children to love and protect nature; there are people who love the arts who make drawing, cutting, gluing and making of collages and posters into a real pleasure. Cooking, healthy eating, following and improving recipes are also among the favorite activities of the team, in which children are involved with great pleasure while acquiring valuable practical skills. Teaching, interactive and strategic table games are interesting activities and a constant source of information for the children.

Naturally, not everything in the garden is rosy, but the team is stable, united and all together they manage to deal with the daily challenges. The support of our donors creates the opportunity for children to grow up outside their families in a supportive environment, among true professionals in child care. We would like to loudly thank the team of **CONCORDIA Children's House** for their dedication, professionalism and all the love they show in caring for the children!





ANNUAL EXPENSES IN 2020	AMOUNT IN BGN	COSTS %
Living costs	285 000	11%
Transportation costs	57 000	2%
Other expenses	235 000	9%
Overheads	142 500	6%
Maintenance and reparations	600	1%
Inventory	0	0%
Taxes and insurances	66 000	3%
Personnel	1 969 000	68%
Total annual expenses of CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation	2 482 100	100%

Our revenues for 2021	2 637 000 BGN
Financing from CONCORDIA Social projects	1 587 000 BGN
Income from State delegated services	617 000 BGN
Donations	59 000 BGN
Project financing	318 000 BGN
Income from own social business	37 000 BGN
In-kind donations	19 000 BGN





We are grateful to our donors, partners, supporting organizations and people who believe in our cause!

Financial support and project financing:

Sofia Municipality
 OP Rights, Equality and Citizenship of EU
 OP Human Resource development
 Active Citizens Fund of FM EEA
 Medicor Foundation, Lichtenstein
 Ursula Zindel Hilti Foundation
 Renovabis, Germany
 Raiffeisenbank Bulgaria
 Trust for social achievement
 Hewlett Packard Enterprise
 Andreew Investment Group
 Purmerul Ltd (Cocosolis)
 CBA Kome
 Billa Bulgaria
 Yettel Bulgaria
 Goodmills Bulgaria
 CETIN Bulgaria
 BNI Bulgaria
 BCause Foundation and DMS
 Unicredit Foundation
 Merck Bulgaria
 Walltopia
 BCNL and social entrepreneurship program Let's Go
 National Children Network
 European Bedding Company
 Dalmatika
 Shop sector
 DM Armaturen
 Dundee precious metals Chelopech

Non-financial and pro-bono support:

Austrian Business Circle
 Bulgarian Food Bank
 BCNL and DarPazar platform
 DB Events
 BRVZ
 NGO Operation Teddy Bear
 ICAP Bulgaria
 Chipita Bulgaria
 Interfoods Bulgaria
 Lidl Bulgaria
 Kaufland Bulgaria
 Endava
 National Sport Academy „Vasil Levski“
 Mediapost Hit Mail Bulgaria
 Robert Bosch
 Megabord Bulgaria
 Crazy Diamond Restaurant
 Mama Ninja non-formal group
 Kamelia flower shop
 Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria
 International Organization of Migration
 State Agency for refugees
 Knyaginya Klementina hospital, Sofia
 18th Medical Center in Sofia

Project partners:

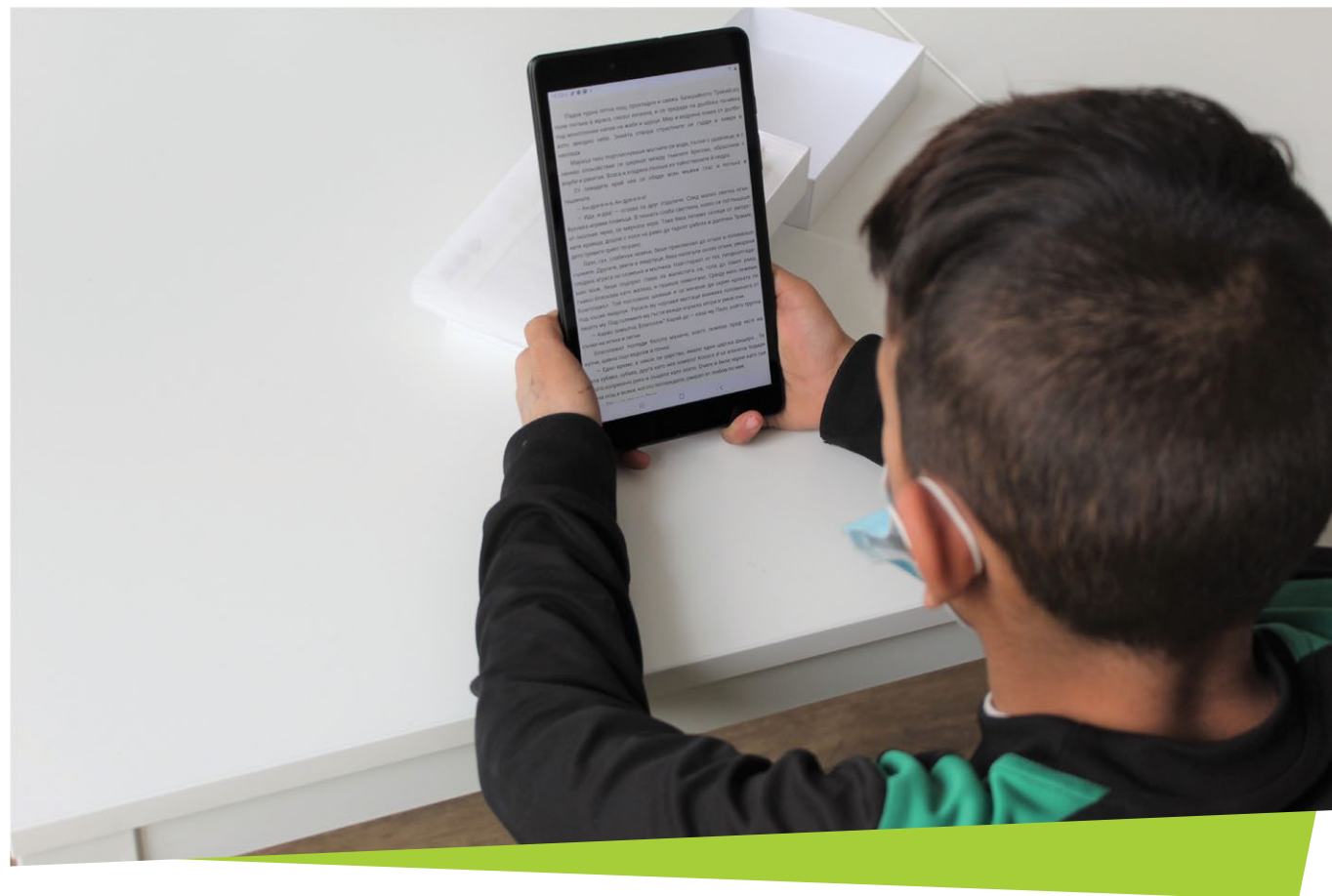
Sofia University
 59th Primary school „Vasil Levski ”
 179 th Kindergarten Sinchetz
 Muzeiko Foundaiton
 KO-OP co-working space for arts

Clients, who trusted our social enterprises:

CARDO
 Darbi Collegge
 Goodmills
 Austrian Embassy
 Safecharge Bulgaria
 New Bulgarian University
 EVN Bulgaria
 Schönherr Bulgaria
 Merck Bulgaria
 Atradius Bulgaria
 IKOR Partners
 Yettel Bulgaria
 Johnson & Johnson Bulgaria
 Consendo
 Nova Translate

Media talking for our social work:

Bulgarian National Radio
 Bulgarian National TV, Small stories
 BG on Air
 Nova News
 Darik Radio
 Marginalia
 ngobg.info
 Praveshki glas newspaper
 www.actualno.com
 www.dnes.bg
 www.nasoki.bg
 www.mediacafe.bg
 www.36omag.bg
 www.uspelite.bg
 www.trud.bg
 www.stolica.bg



CONCORDIA
Bulgaria Foundation
4 Pavlina Unufrieva Str.
Sofia 1510
tel: +359 2 9368620
bulgaria@concordia.bg

Executive Director
Stela Gachevska

CONCORDIA
Social projects

Board
Ulla Konrad
Markus Inama, SJ
Thomas Birtel
Bernhard Drumel

CONCORDIA Austria
Hochstettergasse 6
1020 Wien
office@concordia.or.at
www.concordia.or.at

CONCORDIA Germany
Königstraße 7
70173 Stuttgart
spenderservice@concordia-sozialprojekte.de
www.concordia-sozialprojekte.de

CONCORDIA Romania
Dr. Regimentului 20D
013887 Bucharest
romania@concordia.org.ro
www.concordia.org.ro

CONCORDIA Kosovo
Rr. Lahuta e Malësisë p.n.
20000 Prizren
office@concordia-kosovo.org
www.concordia-kosovo.org

CONCORDIA Moldova
13/1 A Corobceanu str.
Chishinau MD-2004
moldova@concordia.md
www.concordia.md

CONCORDIA Switzerland
Industriestrasse 49
6302 Zug
office@concordia-sozialprojekte.ch
www.concordia-sozialprojekte.ch



© **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation**

Bank account in BGN:

Raiffeisenbank (Bulgaria) EAD

IBAN: BG15RZBB91551060688012

Bic code: RZBB BGsf

www.concordia.bg

