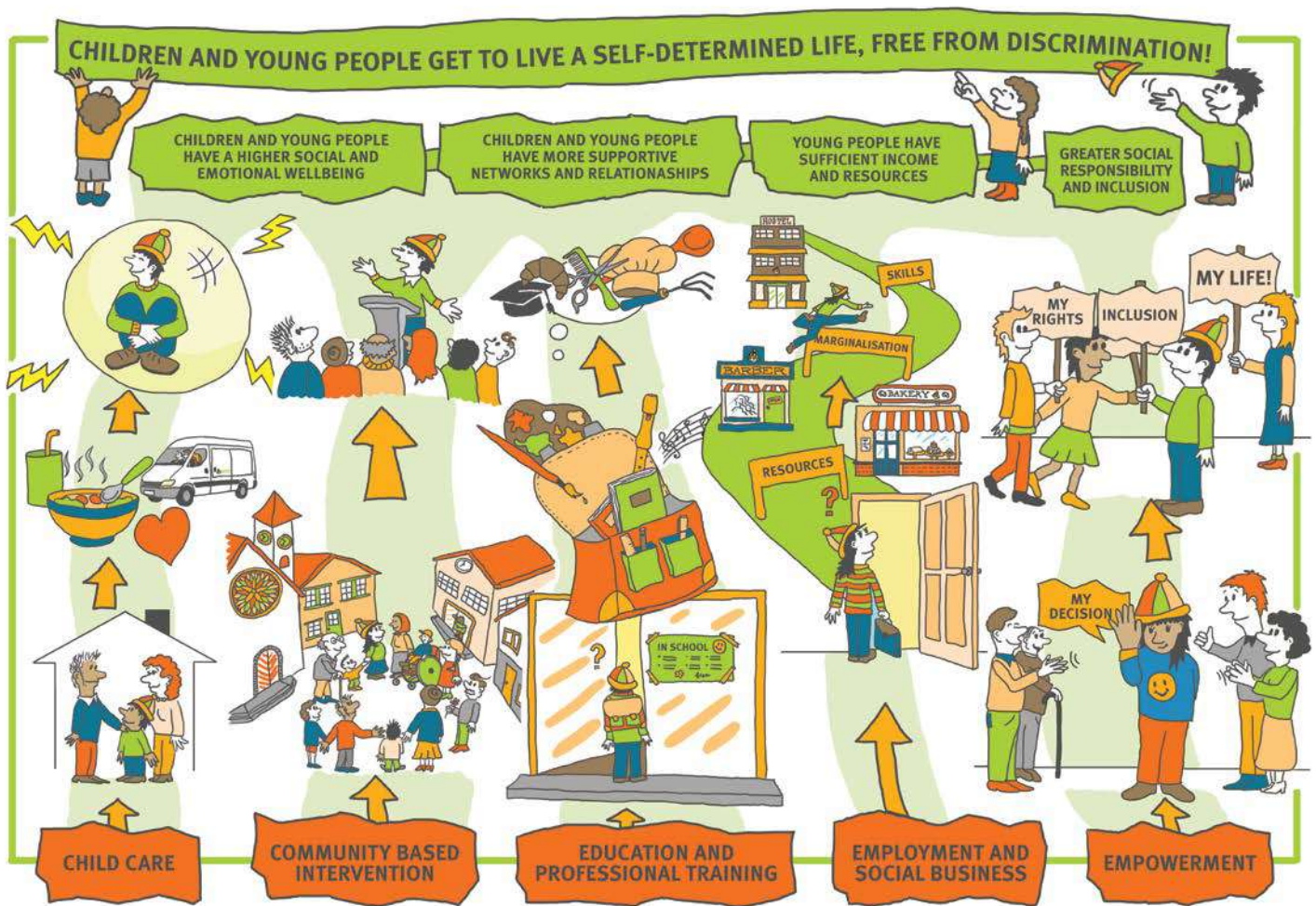




CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

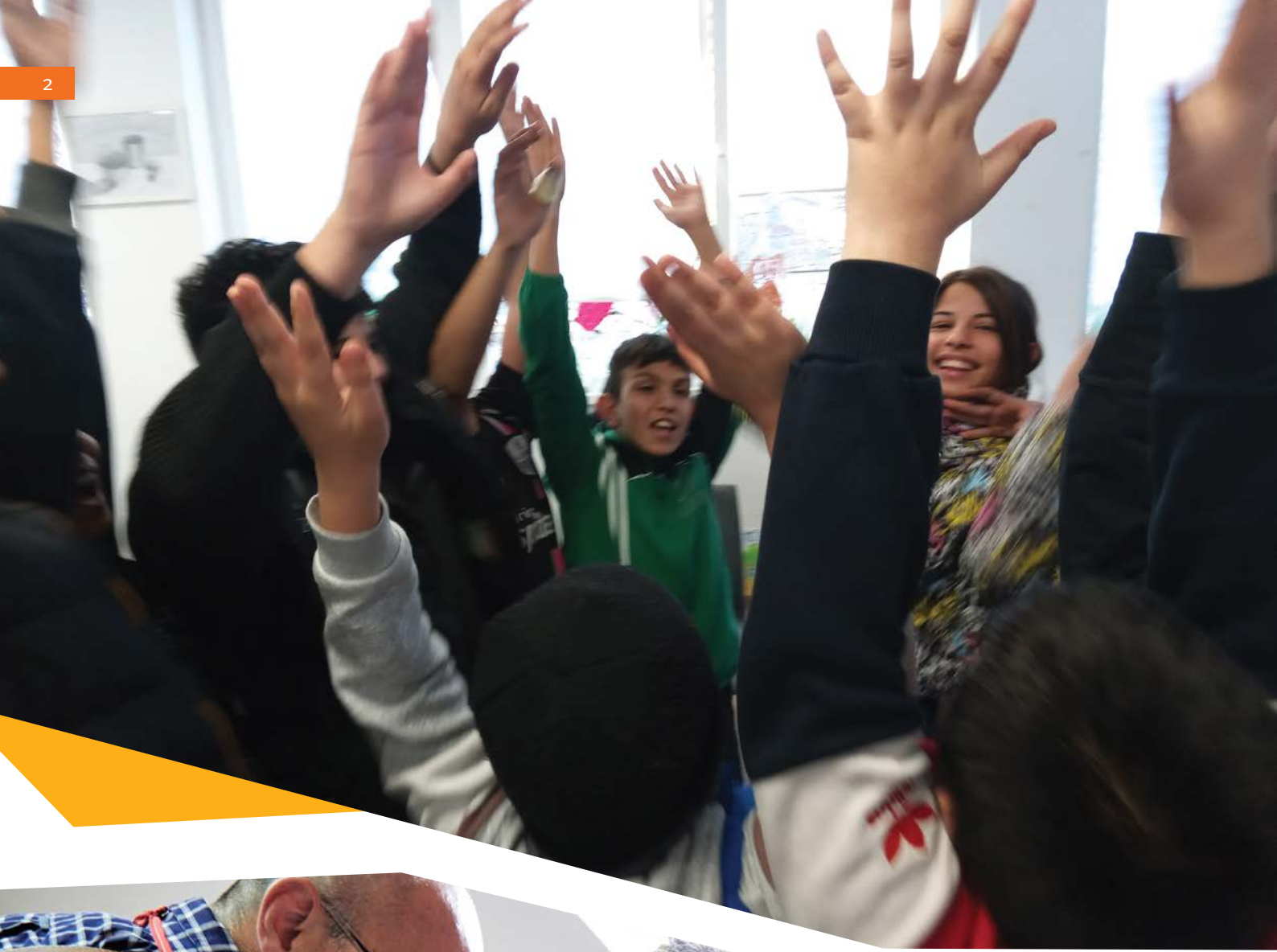


**Whoever saves one life,
saves the whole world!**

CONCORDIA is an international, independent, nongovernmental organisation dedicated to supporting children, young people and families in need, towards a more independent and responsible life.

We go where the need is the greatest.
And where others do not go.





Dear friends,

"Find the sweetness in your own heart, then you may find the sweetness in every heart."

– Rumi

This exquisite wisdom by the Persian scholar Rumi has been an inspiration to the board members, staff and volunteers of **CONCORDIA**. In the face of multiple crises, it was necessary for our entire team and those of the broader **Concordia** community to pay attention to the energy and love in our hearts to be able to help others compassionately and effectively.

Since its inception in 1991, **CONCORDIA** has focused on children, young people, and their families. The psychosocial effects of traumatising experiences of poverty and violence require a high degree of attentiveness, understanding and confidence-building interventions. One of our priorities in 2022 was to therefore strengthen child protection services and develop skills of our staff to manage trauma in children and adolescents.

In Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, and Austria, we opened our doors to Ukrainian refugees and offered new programmes to support them.

In our core programmes, we intensified our family-strengthening support activities in the **CONCORDIA** day centres. Our day centres are safe hubs for children from the poorest communities. Parents are supported to improve their living conditions and gain access to social services, vocational training and job coaching. Often the underlying problem is not a lack of parental care, but the daily struggle for survival in which entire families are stuck for generations.

Our commitment is based on the conviction that every child has the potential and the right to spread their wings and realise their dreams. Together, we remain steadfast in the face of adversity and are committed to breaking down barriers and opening doors so children and young people can live self-determined lives without exclusion.

As the **CONCORDIA** Board of Directors, we would like to thank you once again for your active help and your trust! Please, continue to accompany us on this path of the heart to bring healing and love to those most in need.

With gratitude,



Thomas Birtel
Chairman of
the International
Board of Directors



Pater Markus Inama, SJ
Member of the
Board of Directors



Bernhard Drumel
Managing chairman



Ulla Konrad
Member of the
Board of Directors



WORDS FROM THE BULGARIAN DIRECTOR

We started last year of 2022 with the hope that we will overcome the pandemic that changed our lives. We finished the year with the bitter taste of war which takes lives, separates families and deprives millions of children from their childhood.

We are proud that it took us only a week to reorganize our work and offer shelter and support to people fleeing from the war. It is important that we achieved this without any negative effects on our running social programs and projects.

At the same time, we won three separate tenders for provision of social services and additional financing for a number of projects which enriched the programs of our ongoing social services and made them more appropriate for the everchanging needs of the people using the services.

We started providing social services in one more place – Nadezhda neighborhood, where in since second half of the year our Crisis centre for children with experience of violence is located along with our new Day centre for children and families "Nadezhda".

Convinced that the people working for us are our greatest resource, we continued to invest in trainings and exchanges in order to introduce innovative practices in our work.

As is tradition for us, I would like to thank all of our partners and donors, who believe in the importance of our work. Special thanks also go to all colleagues who are at the heart of all the successes we achieved in the last year.



Stanimir Georgiev
Executive Director





SOCIAL SERVICE	OPENING YEAR	CURRENT CAPACITY	CHILD CARE / 42	COMMUNITY WORK / 1025	EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING / 231	EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL BUSINESS / 65	EMPOWERMENT / 276	EMERGENCY RESPONSE / 94
Centre for social services for young adults "Zdravei"	2008	13+2		61		50	134	
Supervised housing "Timok"	2009	4					5	
Transitional housing "Ropotamo"	2009	8	9					
Day centre for children and families "Posoka"	2009	25		39	30			
Outreach work	2009	-		736	48			
CONCORDIA hairdresser salon	2010	4				2		
Family-type house CONCORDIA	2014	10	9					
CONCORDIA candle and pottery atelier	2015	3				13		
CONCORDIA football club	2015	-		50	55		137	
Centre for children and families "Zaharna fabrika"	2017	50		84	16			
Crisis centre for children with experience of violence	2019	12	24					
Day centre for children and families "Malki Iskar"	2021	60		52	73			
Day centre for children and families "Nadezhda"	2022	-		3	9			
Support for Ukrainian refugees	2022	25+10						94



Our chess and social skills club held 44 sessions

Our CONCORDIA candle and pottery atelier presented our products on 30 different charity events

240 training sessions organized by CONCORDIA football club

1453 customers chose to have their haircuts renewed at the CONCORDIA hairdresser salon

During the year we have supported 1538 people in need through our social programs and 94 refugees from Ukraine

8180 in-kind donations of material support were provided to families in need by the Day centre for children and families "Malki Iskar"

44 volunteers supported us in different initiatives during the year

CONCORDIA VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND CHILD PROTECTION

WE DO OUR UTMOST TO ENSURE THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN.

As an organisation that cares for children and young people, we have a high responsibility and obligation to ensure that children's rights are implemented in our facilities, and above all that they are not violated. In our programmes we work with children and young people with special protection needs. In order to ensure their safety, we rely on various measures inside and outside **CONCORDIA**. These include protection from physical, psychological and sexual violence, from neglect and also from witnessing domestic or partner violence.

Children who have to witness violence can be hindered in their social, emotional and societal development. Domestic violence and child abuse unfortunately often remain invisible and are still a taboo subject. Mostly, children cannot tell anyone that they have experienced violence. They are ashamed, confused or afraid that their family will break up. Children depend on adults for support.

That is why we continuously carry out prevention measures by offering low-threshold help and creating awareness around violence prevention and child protection.



EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING ON CHILD PROTECTION MUST TAKE PLACE AT ALL LEVELS

Our general violence prevention measures are aimed at preventing violence from the outset and identifying problems in the children's immediate environment as early as possible. By offering a wide range of counselling and support services, we try to deal with problematic constellations. In parenting and family counselling, we strengthen parents or other primary caregivers in their care and parenting skills.

A powerful prevention tool is the **CONCORDIA** child protection concept, which was developed in a participatory way. For implementation in everyday life, there are mandatory child protection briefings and an implementation manual in all languages as well as continuous monitoring. The child protection guidelines guarantee quality control in the work with children and young people at organisational level. All **CONCORDIA** staff members are sensitised to recognise signs of a

possible risk to the child's well-being from the child's environment and to take the next steps. On the one hand, our professionals regularly exchange ideas in supervision sessions and attend cross-organisational further training on child protection issues. On the other hand, **CONCORDIA** deals with possible endangerment situations within the organisation.

When we learn of violence that has already taken place or is ongoing, we act quickly and with targeted violence prevention: our complaints management system allows cases to be reported anonymously and in a way that is accessible to all age groups. Every suspected case is investigated 100%. If a suspected case is substantiated, the case management and the internal process plans in the case of child welfare endangerment take effect, taking into account the legal requirements in the respective country.



"We are aware that it is hardly possible to erase child abuse from the face of the earth, but violence can be prevented. Every case of abuse prevented protects another child from being traumatised and hindered in their emotional and social development."

– **Martina Raytchinova**,
CONCORDIA Programme Director
and Child Protection Officer



PARTICIPATION IS A PREREQUISITE FOR EFFECTIVE CHILD PROTECTION

Children are often not aware that violence has been done to them or they do not know where they can get help. It is crucial that children are sensitised to the topic in a child-friendly setting. Therefore, we offer appropriate workshops for children in our facilities. Among other things, on the topic of the body and how to deal with boundary violations. We help children to name their body parts correctly and we strengthen the children to say "no" and to fend off unpleasant touches.

Participation has a high priority in all of our programmes: children are holders of rights, are independent actors and must be informed, asked or involved in all decisions that affect them. In **CONCORDIA**, we have a children's parliament in every country that offers children a safe framework where they can meet and exchange ideas on a regular basis, actively participate in decision-making and also learn that their decisions have consequences.



CENTRE FOR SOCIAL SERVICES FOR YOUNG ADULTS "ZDRAVEI"

Centre for social services for young adults "Zdravei" within **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** supports young people from 18 to 35 years on their way to independence. In the centre, young people who have fallen into serious life difficulties can find temporary accommodation if they have become homeless and consult with a social worker or psychologist. Our support activities first cover the basic needs such as accommodation, food and protected environment, but continue with help in finding and keeping a suitable job as the basis of a dignified and independent life of young people.

During their stay at the centre, young people always have a social worker available to help them with accessing public health services, writing a CV, arranging a job interview, issuing various documents, starting and keeping a job. When young people face greater emotional or personal difficulties, they can also turn to a psychologist to support them in finding the right solution for them.

Not only the young people who choose to take shelter in the centre receive support from the specialists. The **"Open Doors"** initiative allows any youth in need to access a bathroom, dinner in our kitchen and ask our specialists a question without an appointment twice every week. We are proud that through our **"Open Doors"** we reach even the most difficult cases to resolve, such as those of people without documents who remain invisible to all support systems.

In 2022, **Centre for social services for young adults "Zdravei"** managed to enrich its support program through its partnership with the **Trust for Social Achievement** under the implementation of the project **"Future employees – program for activating youths into employment with a focus on risk and Roma groups"**. With the implementation of the project, we reached disadvantaged young people who got involved a program for emotional and communication skills development. Together with the individual support they receive assistance in contacting employers, the project is going as planned, and several young people already have stable jobs.



245
young people
supported by
Zdravei team

208 young people helped
with developing life skills
132 young people sheltered
72 hours of specialized training
in emotional and communication skills

Bogdana is a young and tough girl whom we have supported in the **Centre for social services for young adults "Zdravei"** since September 2022. She spent her childhood and adolescence in social homes, as her biological family failed to provide her with a good environment. The difficult start in life made her rough around the edges and a little shy, and yet also searching for attention and closeness with other people. When faced with difficulties, she becomes aggressive as a learned unhealthy coping strategy and fails to properly assess the consequences of her actions. This leads to her first encounter with the reality of being an independent adult when she is fired from her job for causing material damage.

With the loss of her job, she also becomes homeless. But we believe in giving a second chance, and she is sheltered at **Zdravei centre**. She also receives all the other services that the centre offers – safe shelter, food, access to a bathroom, health support, consultations with a psychologist and a social worker. As time progressed, Bogdana became more actively involved in additional training to improve her emotional intelligence and communication skills at work. All these activities gave a good overall result, because today Bohdana has a new job that she wants and likes, and is trying to keep it. Bogdana no longer shows such aggression and lives an increasingly independent life.



SUPERVISED HOUSING "TIMOK"

Supervised housing "Timok" is a place for disadvantaged young people who are one step away from complete independence. This is an apartment with separate bedrooms and a kitchen, where young people with a job can stay for up to 1 year, until they feel ready to live in their own accommodation and take care of their daily life on their own. During their stay in the apartment, social workers support them in taking small but important steps in achieving independence, such as building a suitable group of friends, organizing a shopping schedule, keeping the apartment clean or planning a personal budget.

Young people who live in this apartment usually have a strong desire to be independent, but still need additional support. They did not always have the opportunity to grow up with their biological family and have difficulties in organizing their own lives. When they need an honest conversation, a social worker and a psychologist are always there to find the right solutions for each young person together. The main focus of our work with the young people from **"Timok" Supervised Housing** is to keep a job and achieve sustainable independence, where meetings with social workers are no longer necessary.

Simeon comes to **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** with a request to get a second chance, but not enough knowledge on how to deal with his problems. In addition to being left unemployed and homeless, he was also sentenced by a bailiff to pay off a serious amount of financial debt. Caught in the trap of an almost complete inability to allocate his salary for his personal expenses, he managed to find support in the faces of our social workers and the opportunity to live in **"Timok" Supervised Housing.**

Our specialists work out a long-term support plan, which Simeon agrees to. Simeon manages to set aside small sums with which to cover his debt and shows extraordinary determination to correct his mistakes. His efforts were not in vain, and he manages to pay the requested sums. Today, he works on a permanent employment contract and has even received several invitations for a better job. When he is not working, he takes care of himself and his household and is not afraid to discuss his future with social workers, where a desire for complete independence keeps growing stronger.

DAY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "POSOKA"

Day centre for children and families "Posoka" is a space in Orlandovtsi residential district where children from 3 to 18 years and their families can receive support for various social difficulties that life has faced them with. A wide range of specialists such as social workers, psychologists, speech therapists, educators and pedagogues work together to improve the lives of families in need. Activities such as art therapy, interest groups, discussions, counseling and social adventures in and outside the centre aim to ensure a happy childhood for children who are in difficult situations such as poverty or social isolation.

The rich experience of the specialists at the day-centre allows working with different groups that need support – children who grew up outside their biological family, with educational difficulties, living below the minimum, wandering or neglected children.

We work on an individual plan for each child and their family with specially selected activities to improve the relationship between the parents and the child.

The team of **"Posoka" Day centre** combines its efforts with other stakeholders such as schools, kindergartens, Child Protection Department, and other social services to develop the strengths of children and families and allow each child to reveal their potential in the best environment for them.

In 2022, the children visiting the centre were able to enjoy many new experiences, some of them for the first time in their lives. We formed a Chess and Social Skills Club where, through the rules of this noble sport, children from different social groups have the opportunity to communicate with each other, learn more about themselves and other people. We organized discussions and watching films that concern important issues such as violence, aggression and bullying at school. With several sports activities such as our climbing program in the centre, outdoor climbing, a visit to an aqua park and even mountain hiking, we were able to encourage the children to believe more in themselves and show them that they can find solutions and overcome difficulties on their own in life.



DAY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "POSOKA" IS A DELEGATED SERVICE BY SOFIA MUNICIPALITY

69 children were supported during the year

600+ individual consultations with children and parents

100+ group sessions for creativity, art and skill development

44 meetings of the Chess Club

13 trainings for the team of "Posoka" Day centre

Lily is an independent by nature child with whom our paths cross for the second time. Already in 2019, she started using the centre's services, but in 2020, her parents decided that she and her younger brother would be placed in a boarding school outside Sofia. During this period, she lost her close relationship with her parents. The team of **"Posoka" Day Centre** managed to maintain contact with her and even visited her on site.

At the end of 2021, Lily and her brother returned to live with their family, thanks to the administrative support provided by our team. After returning to Sofia, Lily experiences many difficulties in her re-integration –

she changed school after she stopped attending it regularly, stopped maintaining good hygiene and claimed that she cannot cope with the tasks set for her. With small steps and the delicate guidance of specialists, in 2022 she was involved in more and more activities and achieved significant successes in various educational and creative activities, because she no longer says **"I can't"**. The biggest success that Lily achieves with the help of the **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** is realizing her own capabilities, to stay motivated, to improve and actively participate in her self-improvement.

CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "ZAHARNA FABRIKA"

Centre for Children and Families "Zaharna Fabrika" is a place where children and families in specific life situations can find support from various specialists. The centre is aimed at working with children at risk, children with mild or moderate disabilities, adoptive parents, large families, families living with financial restrictions and families going through various crisis situations. Social workers, a speech therapist and a psychologist, support families who use the service voluntarily or are referred by other institutions.

A major focus of the Centre for Children and Families is to expand the social skills of children and families and provide opportunities for successful integration of children into their communities. In 2022, the children visited several spaces focused on animal care. There they learned interesting facts about animals, were able to get close to unusual animals and overcome some of their fears related to the unknown. Each week, different children also took part in a Do-It-Yourself workshop, where social workers showed them different activities to develop skills for independent living such as cooking, hair and body care.

Several times we also took the children to the cinema, which is a completely new experience for them due to the lack of disposable income of their families. The children were very impressed by the way light and water photocells work and had the opportunity to learn more about them and other natural phenomena at the **"Muzeiko" summer academy**.

In 2022, we also expanded our support for parents by starting active work with unemployed parents of Roma origin for their literacy under the **"Our Rights and Responsibilities"** project. A large part of the parents participating in the project attended school but are in actuality illiterate. In the sessions with them, we teach them basic literacy, how to deal with communication with different institutions such as a hospital, school or kindergarten, and how to work in a team and communicate with colleagues and supervisors. The activities aim to support the resources already available to these parents and empower them to care for their children.



CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "ZAHARNA FABRIKA" IS A DELEGATED SERVICE BY SOFIA MUNICIPALITY.

100

people are supported by the centre for children and families

- 200+** consultations with a psychologist
- 150+** consultations with a speech therapist
- 16** activities organized outside the centre

Andrey is the younger of two brothers in his family. His parents are caring and try to meet his needs. After an unpleasant incident at Andrey's school, his parents started looking for a solution and, found out about our centre and turn to colleagues for support. Andrey's teacher was very rude to him and isolated him from all his classmates. The complete estrangement from his class causes great stress for Andrey and his mental state begins to deteriorate.

His parents say that he stops talking, refuses to communicate with anyone and closes himself in his own world, the only place where he can find peace.

As early as 2020, we begin intensive work with Andrey and his family, but his parents find it difficult to accept that such a degree of disinterest in others needs long-term psychological support. In 2022, Andrey achieved considerable success, as he now speaks calmly with the psychologist, is confident when meeting with the social worker and even joins group activities with other children. Support for Andrey and his family will continue in the future, as the team at the Centre for Children and Families sees his potential and believes that he can have a happy adolescence.

DAY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "MALKI ISKAR"

CONCORIDA Day Centre in the village of Malki Iskar is located in a two-floor house, which became a symbol of real support for the community in the village. The centre opened in June 2021 and in 2022 has enriched the activities to support people in need who live in material and social poverty. Children and families who contact us can count on the rich experience of a social worker, pedagogue, psychologist and nurse with specific inquiries of any kind.

In 2022, the focus of our work remained educational support for the children of the village. With the closure of the only school, the children were left with no space for education or extracurricular activities. We provided just that for them – children from the community in the village met in small groups with a teacher to give them individual attention. In cooperation with the new school where the children are studying and their new teachers, we managed to re-integrate several children back to a school environment and stabilise regular school attendance in the neighboring village.

The family centre in the village of Malki Iskar also provides vital medical aid for people isolated in this small corner of Bulgaria. The village does not have a medical office, a general practitioner or even a pharmacy. However, at **Malki Iskar CONCORIDA Day Centre**, we ensured the presence of a nurse who is always ready to give advice, information and

medical guidance. In her work with mothers and children, she emphasizes on monitoring children's development and advises on better care regarding breastfeeding, nutrition and hygiene. Along with this medical advice, children and families in need can go to a consultation with the social worker or psychologist on how to build a better family environment where children feel protected, loved and encouraged to develop.

We also organize interest groups with the children, where through carpentry, sewing and tailoring workshops, we can enrich their knowledge of maintaining the comfort of their home and develop important cognitive skills such as fine motor skills and attention. In 2022, the families received support from several local businesses and private donors who are passionate about improving the community. Our other national partners provided important educational materials for the children through donations, Christmas gifts, everything needed for various celebrations and a visit to a real cinema, which was a first-time experience for some of the children. Going forward, the day centre plans to strengthen the foundations of educational support and to further involve the local community in motivating children and young people to attend regular school and not to give up their education.



125
people supported
in the centre

8180 items of material support distributed
580 group education sessions
340+ medicines provided

Grandma Peppa and her entire family are one of the first participants in our program at the centre. She is the pillar of Pripek neighbourhood in the village of Malki Iskar. Everything starts with her. Having experienced many joys and many sorrows, today she lives in great poverty, often barely can even make ends meet, but she does not give up. She continues with a lot of energy and loves to take care of her large family of over 40 people – 8 children, as many sons- and daughters-in-law, 20 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren. Or – a whole neighborhood raised by only one mother. She is "Mother Teresa" of the village of Malki Iskar, as we all like to call her.

We decided to help her in every way, because of the great responsibility she has taken for her large family. We support both her and her entire family with: educational and art activities, household and psychological support. We help her because of the poverty in which she lives and her care for so many children, grandchildren and

great-grandchildren; because of her fighter's spirit and willingness to always help. Except to her directly, we also help individual families in her big family. The parents of the children – her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who have turned to us for support, also get what they need. Food is not always enough for the family. Grandma Peppa often wonders how to make sure that children have everything they need. For them to be well and for her to be calm and smiling.

We are happy to be able to support Grandma Peppa and all her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. From us they receive: food, clothes, shoes, medicine, other household items, additional education. They grow up calm, healthy, strong and happy, which would not have been possible without our intervention. We support them to become more independent, take their lives into their own hands and develop according to their abilities and interests.

FAMILY-TYPE HOUSE CONCORDIA

Family-type house CONCORDIA is a cosy house that the children accommodated in it call their home. The group that lives in the house under the constant care of educators and social workers is diverse in age. Children from 4 to 14 years of age can live in the house if the environment in their biological family is not stimulating enough and is not suitable for them. In the house, all the specialists strive to create as close to a family environment as possible, so that the children can feel calm, rely on the adults around them and get the support in every aspect they need.

In 2022 we managed to provide a variety of activities for the children, and we tried to make them feel protected and encouraged to show their best. With the help of our donors, 2 summer excursions were organized for the children – to the mountains and to the sea, where they could train their endurance, bond even more as a group or enjoy the warm summer rays. The staff at the mountain hut and at the sea camp base also noted that the children

are now much calmer and more confident than on our previous visits.

Throughout the year, we relied on the support of local and international volunteers who, with their interesting ideas and initiatives, make the children's everyday life more interesting. Some volunteers make sure the children get to and from school or kindergarten safely, others help with homework, and still others show them how to play the guitar or another instrument. The children at **the CONCORDIA Family-type house** are also involved in the duties typical of a household, which help them to be independent – everyone takes care of their dog – Mecho, helps with the maintenance of the yard, keeps their room clean and tidy, and participates in the weekly shopping. These activities are especially useful for the three children who in 2022 continued their path in other similar services as they turned 14 years old. We wish everyone the best of luck and success in this adventure called life!



9
children
lived in the house

32 000 steps taken to the
mount of Cherni Vrah
58 educational groups
organized for children
3 children participated in school trips
for straight "A" students

Metodi is a playful and smart 11-year-old boy who came to **CONCORDIA Family-type house** after a short stay in the **Crisis centre for children with experience of violence**. During his childhood, he experienced his parents' separation, arguments between them, and a rift in his family, leading to him and his sister taking care of their mentally ill father alone.

Although wise for his age, Metodi stops going to school and begins to lead a street life, taking care of himself and the people he loves as best he can. However, his needs remain in the background as there is no adult around to take care of him. That is why he is extremely suspicious

of all the adults in the house from his first day. Over time, however, he begins to trust them and little by little begins to rely on them. He goes back to school, starts practicing football with other boys his age and starts building healthy connections with the people around him. Soon after his first night in the house, his sister also came to live in the house with him and the other children. Living together in a protected environment has a very positive effect on them, and although they still fight sometimes, both brother and sister can be real children who have someone who takes care of them every day.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING "ROPOTAMO"

"Ropotamo" Transitional housing supported 9 disadvantaged young people in 2022. Ropotamo is a residential service for 14- to 18-year-olds providing 24/7 care for them as they are not living with their biological families. In this service, young people receive constant support and find the security that their families have not been able to provide them with. In a small family house, they live together, cook, clean, shop, talk and find their way to themselves and to the world.

The **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing** team provides constant care for the young people to ensure a normal adolescence. In 2022, all the young people accommodated in the house managed to pass to the next class, and only one of them was in individual form of education.

Many young people have faced many administrative difficulties. Two of them are unaccompanied refugees and the team achieved great success in issuing identity

documents for them, allowing them to gain full access to public life in Bulgaria. For another boy, we took a lot of care of his health in the process of diagnosing an autoimmune disease and building a new healthy lifestyle. Alongside these difficulties, the young people received daily advice and support from the service's social workers to make their otherwise difficult adolescence happier.

In 2022, **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing** was actively partnering with several organizations. Thanks to our joint work, the youths took part in an eco-camp in the village of Bunovo, organized by the **"Hope for Us 2008" Association**, an eco-action at Vitoshka, an excursion to the Uzana hut, acquired new independence skills in a training by **"SOS Children's Villages Bulgaria" Foundation** and found like-minded people from the **"Hope and Homes for Children – Bulgaria" Association** to listen to their stories.



Vihren came to **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing** at the age of 16. He spent the last 2 years of his young life caring for his father, who adopted him when Vihren was 6 years old. Until then, the boy had been growing up in a home for children deprived of parental care and to this day Vihren does not know who his biological parents are.

Obsessed with worrying about his father, Vihren forgot to take care of himself – he stopped going to school, didn't maintain friendships and didn't have a circle of his own peers. Vihren's father passed away after a long illness, and the only significant adult for him remained a former colleague of his father. Thus, left without contact with the outside world and himself, Vihren was placed

first in the **Crisis centre for children with experience of violence** and after a short stay there he began to live in the **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing**. The team quickly developed an action plan, and 2 employees became his guardians. They also managed to support him in the procedure of obtaining an inheritance pension. They enrolled him in school and included him in activities of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation**, such as the chess club and our mountain activities. Vihren began trusting people slowly and started talking about himself, about his problems, about his dreams and his plans, as the first step towards their successful implementation, which we sincerely wish him!

The strategy of the **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** is to focus on community based social services, supporting children and young people to grow up in a stable family environment. Therefore, at the end of 2022, we closed **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing** and the service is

no longer being provided. The team of the house is in contact with all young people to help them cope with this transition period. Some of the colleagues remained in the organization and continue to contribute to the development of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria** with their expertise.



THE CRISIS CENTRE FOR CHILDREN WITH EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE IS A DELEGATED SERVICE OF SOFIA MUNICIPALITY

CRISIS CENTRE FOR CHILDREN WITH EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE

Crisis centre for children with experience of violence is a crisis centre of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria**, which provides institutional protection and safety for children who encountered various forms of violence in the family or outside the family environment. Each child is given professional care to overcome the traumatic consequences of the crisis situation.

In 2022, 24 children used the services of the Crisis centre, of which 11 boys and 13 girls, aged between 6 and 18. Regardless of the condition in which they were accommodated, almost all of them started or continued to attend school regularly. After their period of staying with us, some children were transferred to Transitional Housing, others to Family-type Housing Centres, and some were returned to their biological families where appropriate for their individual cases. As of the end of 2022, we continue to take care of ten children.

24
children supported

During the year, the children took part in various occupations and activities, according to their interests: art competitions, a hairdressing course at the **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Hairdressing Salon**, hikes along the Vazov eco-trail, Stara Planina and Mount Polovrak, a photography course at "Hug Me" Atelier, cleaning natural spaces in Vitosha Nature Park.

In 2022, we enjoyed the help of 4 volunteers. Together with the children, they participated in various sports, creative and educational activities. During the year, various of our partners continued to support us – individuals, companies, school principals and other institutions. In 2022, the children at the Crisis centre were supported by 7 interns who want to work in the field of social work and enriched children's outlook while gaining valuable practical experience.

148 consultations with a psychologist
55 medical examinations for children
22 holidays celebrated with the children

16-year-old Tanya came to us in a severe emotional state. The reason for her accommodation was the inability of the parents to cope with upbringing and controlling of their daughter's "unruly" behavior. They had even gone as far as punishing her physically, locking her at home, and even more in an attempt to control her risky behavior. What they achieved with these parenting methods, however, was her running away from home more frequently, her developing riskier relationships with peers, which resulted in her being on the verge of becoming a victim of trafficking.

Tanya's first months with us were difficult for everyone. She continued her runaway attempts and "rebellious"

behavior. Step by step, she began to trust us, to like some of the activities we offered her, and gradually she began to attend school regularly. She shared, looked for our advice, got her smile back. At the same time, our team also worked with her parents. With the passage of time, her father was able to understand that his daughter had grown up and needed support and understanding. We held multiple meetings between Tanya and her relatives, their relationship gradually improved. After six months of supporting both the girl and her parents, Tanya returned home willingly. She had grown up, realized that there are rules everywhere, and her parents shared more with her, enjoyed her company and began to support her more and more.



THE DAY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "NADEZHDA" IS A DELEGATED SERVICE OF SOFIA MUNICIPALITY.

DAY CENTRE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES "NADEZHDA"

"Nadezhda" Day centre opened its doors in June 2022. In a structured and protected environment, in the day centre, children receive support from a team of social workers, a pedagogue, an art therapist and a psychologist. These are children who have experienced violence, live in extreme poverty and with other difficulties in their family environment. The capacity of the centre is eight children, with up to 12 children being supported in many of the months. The team also has regular consultations with parents and relatives of the children. The goal is to inform and advise them, to help them increase their parental capacity and live better together. From the opening of the social service until the end of 2022, the centre mainly supported and supported children placed in the Crisis Centre and their relatives. These are 12 children between the ages of 6 and 17, almost all of them go to school regularly thanks to our support.

Children receive health care and support – medical examinations, formation of habits to maintain personal hygiene and a healthy lifestyle, we discuss health topics

through an educational lens, etc. We work with them to form basic social, household and communication skills, negotiation skills, skills for cooperation in games and other activities, formation of socially acceptable behavior, independence in taking care of their own body and maintaining a clean and healthy look. Individual and group sessions are held along with educational and art classes and sports activities for the formation and development of basic cognitive skills. A very important part of the day centre is psychological work with children to process their traumatic experiences, as well as activities targeted at preventing violence and aggression, informing children about their rights, developing and implementing programs for the prevention of anti-social behavior, etc. Part of these are discussion on the topics of thefts and their consequences, rights and responsibilities, types of violence, etc. Volunteers are also supporting the social workers and provide the children with individual attention and support, helping them to increase their self-esteem and gain important decision-making skills.

Stefan came to us in an extremely neglected appearance – torn and dirty clothes and without any hygienic habits. He told us that at home they are not interested in him and do not pay any attention to him. He was also abused by his parents. It would not be uncommon that he did not sleep all night because they would abuse alcohol all night long. Stefan has a disability diagnosis of idiopathic epilepsy he received by an expert medical committee after going through a medical assessment process. He has a visible developmental delay. However, we noticed that he is a very smart and alert child and has the potential for growth.

The psychologist started working with him on overcoming his trauma and anxiety. We also provided him with

additional pedagogical support, which led to excellent results. Stefan's class teacher quickly began to share that the boy was already developing well. Everyone at his school was amazed that Stefan was able to progress so much and was willing to learn and improve. Gradually, the child began to pay attention to his appearance, to dress according to the season and to be proud of himself. Thanks to our hard work, Stefan learned that he is valued and that he should not allow violence into his life. He now knows that no one has the right to hit and insult him. He learned patience, acquired a competitive spirit. Art therapy inspired and calmed him, and it turned out he really likes drawing. When we parted with Stefan, he gave to each team member an original painting of his.

OUTREACH WORK

The **Outreach** team are the people at CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation who are most often outside and it is difficult to find them in the office. The social workers, the manager, the nurse and the driver from the team can be seen more often in the field – in socially isolated neighborhoods where people in need live, with extremely limited opportunities. The outreach team is well aware of the obstacles these people face and therefore focuses its work on mobilizing the available resources – together with individuals and the community we seek for solutions to current problems and concrete steps are followed to improve the condition of the individuals and the community.

In 2022, the long-standing outreach team almost completely changed, but this did not prevent the planned activities. During the year, they were able to hold several literacy groups, specifically focused on the needs of communities at risk to work with institutions

and understand where and what type of help they can receive. They continued the field visits in Sofia-city and took small steps to support large socially isolated communities in Sofia-region as well. People in a socially vulnerable condition were able to receive from us counseling on various social topics, preventive support in cases with risky behavior such as frequent runaways from school, begging, living on the street, etc. The nurse also actively continued her work with general medical exams and advice, purchasing and providing medicines, accompanying people to examinations, and advocating for the health of people in need. Along with the direct activities on the field, our outreach team continued the **"Open Doors"** initiative, which allows three times a week families in need with children and single elderly people to have a bath, get a sandwich (and clothes if they need) and the opportunity for someone really to listen to and help them!



784
people supported
by the Outreach team

- 380+** people have received material support
- 371** times people used our hot showers
- 171** medical consultations and examinations by a nurse

Silvia is a mother in a large family who, not for the first time, seeks help from **CONCORDIA Outreach team**. Over the years we have supported her and her family with all the services they have needed – material support, health checkups with a nurse for her and her children, guidance and advice to improve childcare, kindergarten and school enrollment, support for organizing family life and on many other issues important for her and her family.

Silvia does not have great material opportunities and her life situation is extremely poor and modest. Her destiny in life is that of a mother and housewife, as her pregnancies are frequent and sometimes consecutive. Some of her

children are now grown up and living independently, but others are small and still need her daily attention and care. In 2022, she contacted our outreach team again as she understood that her last pregnancy was very risky for both her health and that of the child due to her inability to eat healthy and a severe iron deficiency. After many consultations with our social specialists and doctors, Silvia took a decision for herself and her future, which would calm her down and allow her to feel good. Today, the outreach team continues to support her by focusing on family planning, health care and creating a healthy routine for Sylvia and her children.

SOCIAL BUSINESS

CONCORDIA social business is part of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria's** program for social entrepreneurship and consists of **CONCORDIA candle and pottery atelier** and **CONCORDIA hairdresser salon**.

The main goal of our social business is to provide opportunities for employment for young people living in inequality. Throughout 2022 a total of 3 people worked in our Atelier and 2 boys finished their vocational internship in the hair salon. In the pottery atelier we also hired one young adult on a labor contract through our project **3, 2, 1 – Work is fun! – Social inclusion of youths at risk through professional integration**.

In the summer of 2022 all the youths of **CONCORDIA candle and pottery atelier** took part in a training on communication skills and emotional intelligence. This gave them the opportunity to gain another perspective on the significance of communication between co-workers, friends, with your employer and with administrative structures. The youths are working harder and harder and are getting better and better in making candles and pottery.

Our work in **CONCORDIA candle and pottery atelier** was quite intensive last year. We spent a total of 30 days offering our products in 10 different companies on charity events. This year the Atelier also worked with volunteers who donated their precious time to our cause in one of the most intensive periods around the Christmas holidays.



Harry turned 18 in January 2022. **CONCORDIA** has been supporting him since he was 9 years old and he spent the last 5 years of his life in **family-type house CONCORDIA**. There he was able to find a home, friends and adults, who care about him and are preparing him for adulthood and the time when he will have to take care of himself on his own. Harry has special education needs but his school attendance is spotless and he does extremely well

with reading and writing. He has graduated high school. Shortly before turning 18 he started an internship in **CONCORDIA candle and pottery atelier**. He was very proud to say **"I am working!"**. He is focused and efficient and the other colleagues in the Atelier testify to that. After turning 18 Harry was officially hired in the Atelier with a labor contract. Now he lives independently in a place he rents. Harry continues to grow into a confident young man.

SPORTS PROGRAM

Sports is a unique tool for integration of groups at risk of social inclusion. Our longtime experience in inclusion of children in need through sports shows that even the opportunity for children to play sports professionally is a huge motivator for them to achieve successes in other aspects of their lives. This is why every year the players of **CONCORDIA football club** are getting more numerous and more successful. They play with gusto and passion supported by a professional coach, psychologist and social workers because we care about their educational and sports future. Every child that plays for us completely free of charge in our football club does that after agreeing with our condition to put effort in school and to graduate every school year. We are happy to share that in the last couple of years there has been only a few isolated cases where someone was not able to achieve that.

The children often share with us that on the playing field during official games of the Bulgarian Football Union they feel more than capable of achieving even their wildest dreams. Those dreams are supported by the entire team of **FC CONCORDIA** who take part in various activities. In 2022

our football players participated in the Sofia municipality Vacation program and the club received a lifetime contribution award for developing sports programs. The club also organized 2 sport camps so the players can get ready for the start of the competition season.

Since 2022 the sports program of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria** includes 3 sports – football, climbing and chess. The idea on starting a chess club came from the children and team members of **FC CONCORDIA** and with everyone's effort it was quickly achieved. Our climbing program lives a very active life in the **day centre for children and families "Posoka"** and keeps the climbing coaches busy. This rapid development of the sports program brings us pride because by including different sports we encourage the development of different skills – teamwork, endurance, spatial orientation, quick decision making, building strategies, knowing your own body, using your own strengths and weaknesses, etc. All of these skills are integral for the successful integration of children from vulnerable communities we support and can happen because of the generosity of our donors!



242

children trained
with **FC CONCORDIA**

240 training sessions organized

60 official football games

46 players officially registered
in the Bulgarian Football Union

Yoan was a 15-year old boy when he set foot for the first time on the playing field of **FC CONCORDIA**. He quickly realized that our team is what he has been looking for and started playing in the central defender position. He developed a very good relationship with all of his team members, gained their trust easily and became team captain.

Besides on the football field, Yoan showed great promise in school too – since he started training with **FC CONCORDIA** he graduated every year successfully with excellent grades. The support he received from our specialists and the sports

community pays off – Yoan was able to see the positives of being part of something greater than yourself, for people to be there in your best and in your worst moments, for someone to give you guidance. Yoan chose to continue his education after high school on the advice of the entire **FC CONCORDIA** team. Thanks to his constant work, today he is studying in university in Romania and even receives a scholarship for his efforts. We wish him success in all his future endeavors and to never be afraid of new challenges as he has already proven he is more than capable of handling anything!

OUR SPECIAL MOMENTS IN 2022

CONCORDIA CHARITY CUP – FOOTBALL FOR INVISIBLE CHILDREN

The first edition of our **CONCORDIA Charity Cup** football tournament in support of children and youths in disadvantage took place in June 2022 on the fields of Sportna Sofia complex. A total of 8 teams participated – 7 from business organizations and 1 **CONCORDIA football club** own team.

We are thankful for the support and professional teamplay of the teams of **Yettel Bulgaria, Ingram Micro Bulgaria, SiteGround, UniCredit Bulbank, Experian Bulgaria, Orbit Ltd** and **FC Inferno**. With their inclusion in the tournament they recognized our cause to support children and youths at risk. We congratulate everyone and especially the youths from **FC CONCORDIA** who while younger than other teams, played equally as passionate and performed more than worthy.

As expected the tournament had a very positive atmosphere – emotional with screams of joy. All of the players played with dedication and gave it everything they had. We believe this was because sports and football in particular is a powerful medium for integration of people of all ages and especially children and youths. In sports – as in life – skills and efforts matter in reaching success and independence. This is what we strive to pass on to the children and young adults we support.

Our goal is to make **CONCORDIA Charity Cup** a traditional yearly initiative. Through it we want to continue our successes in the program for social integration through sports that we started more than 7 years ago. In it we teach children about tolerance, discipline, respecting each other, we help them acquire social experience and communication skills, to build upon their health and nutrition habits and to increase their interests in sports.



**CONCORDIA
CHARITY CUP 2023
COMING SOON!**





SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIANS FLEEING FROM THE WAR

Shortly after the onset of the war in Ukraine in March 2022 we opened our doors to provide support for children and families coming to Bulgaria. In the first weeks we had 20 open spaces in our Social and youth centre on str. Pavlina Unufrieva 4 in the second half of the year we increased the capacity to 30.

The Ukrainian refugees seeking support from us can receive shelter including 3 meals a day, a bed, access to bath facilities and clothing. To all of them we provide administrative support as well – we inform them on the steps needed to receive refugee status in Bulgaria and issue

all needed documents for them. In case they need medical support, we help them find an appropriate specialist and purchase medicines for them. We can provide them with temporary employment in our social business. We support them based on their individual needs and some of them are employed in the social enterprises of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation**. We started providing classes in Bulgarian language for Ukrainians both living with us and outside of our services. The classes are open to everyone interested in them as long as people are serious about the learning process.

UNTIL NOW WE HAVE SUPPORTED 94 REFUGEES. AT THE MOMENT WE HAVE 25 PEOPLE STAYING WITH US.

Anyone looking for information or support in Bulgaria can write to us, call us at **0879060477** or use the unified information portal **www.gov.bg/bg/ukraine**



Our meeting with the very first family from Ukraine who sought shelter with us was extremely emotional. We could see their fear hiding behind their seemingly calm demeanour. It was only the second day that they were staying with us and they were still not quite able to grasp their new reality. **“Last night we slept for the first time ever since the war started...”** was one of the things that Galya, the daughter in the family, shared with me.

“We are afraid for our lives but we want to go back when this is all over. Today there should have been negotiations and we are hoping that there was an agreement to end the war...” continued Galya with hope. Long after this conversation the war is not yet over and continues to this day.

We are happy that the family is now in Norway and we can only wish for a better future and living in peace once again.

PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

3 HIKES, 3 CHALLENGES, 3 TOPS or nothing is impossible

At the end of 2021 we had a very successful fundraising campaign **Helping children at risk reach their tops** after the team at **Day centre for children and families "Posoka"** gave us the idea. The idea came when the children drew some extremely impressive pictures of Bulgarian mountains without ever having seen them in real life. They shared with us that these are the peaks they want to see and conquer and we decided to make that dream come true. The campaign was boosted by individual and corporate donors, influencers, mountain lovers, green organisations and people who appreciate the beauty of our nature. We decided that with the funds we raised we need to take the children hiking so they can conquer their peaks.



We made the initiative **3 hikes, 3 challenges, 3 tops** a reality and in fact the hikes, challenges and tops were more than initially planned. Together with the children we reached the tops of peak Kom, Malyovitza, Bula, Ispolin, Cherni Vrah, Poluvrak and others. These experiences gave the children the opportunity to expand their comfort zone, to get to know their physical abilities better, to improve skills on planning, organizing, taking responsibility for the process, setting goals and overcoming challenges on the road to reaching that goal.

This initiative is part of the overall vision of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria foundation** to teach children through experiences, to love and protect nature, to participate in sports, to keep growing and to keep challenging themselves. We show them that journey is more important than the destination.



CHESS AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPING SOCIAL SKILLS FOR CHILDREN

This initiative was started in the beginning of 2022 by **Day centre for children and families "Posoka"**. Since the first moment the children showed great interest in it. The activities are designed for the children that we support in the social centres of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** but everyone interested in chess is welcomed. The classes take place each week and develop their social skills – providing space for communication, exchanging ideas and improving in the game of chess – this is what happens every time.

Every activity is dedicated to a general topic that we connect with chess and we apply in life as in the noble game. Among the topics discussed during the year are "I am on top – what are the characteristics of top chess players?", "The pawn – slow and steady", "The great kings, queens and great chess masters", etc. Every activity has a competitive side with prizes for the winners, rewards for the participants and new knowledge gained.

We want to invite well-known chess players on a regular basis so the children can learn to communicate with them and increase their knowledge. In 2022 Georgi Filev – a chess master and teacher – was our guest – and our small chess club had their first tour. Starting in **day care centre for children and families "Posoka"**, the children started visiting the homes of other children playing in the club and in other social centres of **CONCORDIA Bulgaria foundation**. **Billa Bulgaria** also supports our chess club for the latter part of the year and they purchased new chess boards for all children and the book "Basics of the game of chess".

We believe that with this initiative we can develop a trusting relationship with the children, friendship and empathy in a fun and playful way. Oh, and help the children play chess better.



OUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES PROJECT

In 2022 **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** continued to carry out activities on an extremely important issue for the people we support in their social inclusion – rights and responsibilities. The **Our Rights and Responsibilities Project – empowerment of vulnerable groups program** has been implemented since 2021 and the activities will end in 2023. In the project, we focus on one of the most vulnerable groups we work with – unemployed parents from risk groups – and through the method of "help for self-help" we work for their empowerment.

In 2022 several pilot literacy training courses were held for the project participants, and we also started a partnership with the **Health and Social Development Foundation**. They opened their doors for us and together we were able to meet mothers and parents who visit their centres but are experiencing difficulties that the training should address. Pedagogues on basic literacy work to implement the project and answer parents' questions, while educators entertain the children, and thus we manage to ensure their peace of mind during the training.

One of the participants told us that the literacy training for working with institutions, showing the participants important forms, documents and declarations was very useful for her, as until now she relied on her daughter who is in the 4th grade and can read and write better than herself. Hundreds of people continue to live with this reality, and their inability to communicate with institutions significantly complicates their lives. By piloting the program for the empowerment of vulnerable groups, which **Our Rights and Responsibilities project** allowed us to do, we continue to reduce the difficulties for these parents to live a dignified life without marginalization.

"Our Rights and Responsibilities" project 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.

Future employees – program for activating youths into employment with a focus on risk and Roma groups is a project implemented by **Centre for social services for young adults "Zdravei"** in the period between March 2022 and August 2023 with the financial support of **Trust for Social Achievement**. During the project we support young adults in risk between the ages of 18 and 35 to find a job they like, to keep their employment and, through participating in the employment market, to improve their way of life.

As part of the project we created detailed profiles for the youths who sought our support for participating in the project. We organized trainings in communication skills and emotional intelligence which are extremely important for the youths in order to succeed in communicating

with colleagues, employers, working in a team and controlling negative emotions in their work place. The adolescents who complete the entire training cycle receive a certificate and a small amount of fellowship. For anyone who wishes to find their new job we provide consultations how, where, what they need to do to apply for an interview and how to best present themselves.

In 2023 we plan on organizing additional trainings in order to reach the full capacity for project participants. We will also have a seminar meeting with potential employers where we will speak about the project, the specifics and the needs of youths and risk and how to build a partnership to support them. The results and the impact of the project will be announced on a special conference as part of the project.



16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

November 25 – December 10, 2022: As part of the **16 Days Against Violence Against Women** campaign, this year we raised awareness of the various forms of violence against women and the consequences for children.

No matter how many times we say it, it is not enough: Even if the violence is not pointed directly at the children but they witness the act of violence, such an experience has a huge impact on them.



"I prayed that my mother would leave my father and we would all escape from his constant abuse together" – Unfortunately, psychologists at our crisis centres often hear this. When we talk about such cases, we have to say that the affected children and young people experience the worst. And it is well known what long-term damage such an experience can have and how children are left scarred by such events for life. There is a huge need for safe places where children who have experienced abuse can feel safe and cared for. **CONCORDIA Social Project** operates several crisis centres for children and mothers with children in its countries.

VOLUNTEERS



"I miss volunteering when I'm not with the kids!"

concluded Franz, one of our international volunteers, only a month after his volunteer service had started. Franz supports the children in the Crisis centre by bringing fresh energy and ideas such as games in the yard, educational games or going to Vitosha for skiing on clear winter days. The children like to ask us when they will go to Vitosha again and are quick to boast that it was "very cool" skiing with Franz.

In 2022, Merle also started her volunteer program at **CONCORDIA Family-type house**. When she went to the house for the first time, she entered with such determination and enthusiasm that the children and the colleagues began to wonder if she was someone's sister or relative. After a week, the children began to call her Merry, not only because it was easier for them, but because they had already become very close. Merle is very consistent and everyone in the house relies on her and knows that when she is with the kids, they will not only be safe, but they will have fun too!

Together with our international volunteers, in 2022 we also had several events and programs in which volunteers from Bulgaria also supported us! With **Hewlett Packard Enterprises**, we continued the program of additional online lessons for children experiencing difficulties in school. The children meet online with **HPE** staff at a time convenient for them and the volunteers, in addition to helping them with their lessons, also talk about life and show the children another reality that is achievable for them.

During several charity bazaars with the participation of our **CONCORDIA Candle and Pottery Atelier**, volunteers from **Cargill** and **HPE** also helped us by presenting our products to potential customers. More than 30 volunteers supported us in the charity bazaars by advertising the products and together with them and the young people from **CONCORDIA Atelier** we were able to make many sales to support our social support programs.



CONCORDIA TEAM

Behind the work of any organization are the people in it. **CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation** is proud of the people who choose to work tirelessly for the dignified life of children and young people in need. One of the many teams that are the core of our success is the **Transitional housing "Ropotamo"** team consisting of 3 educators, 3 social workers and 1 manager.

This humble but dedicated team went to work every day to ensure the best future for the young people accommodated in the house. Their work with young people is very diverse – sometimes they have to be the authority figures who set boundaries and enforce rules, sometimes they have to be the best friends to unravel the most current drama in the teenagers' lives, and sometimes they have to navigate the tangled relationships between the young person, the family and the institutions. Their work is by no means easy and requires a high level of professional qualification. We owe the success of the house to this and to the dedication of our colleagues.

A teenager's daily life is hard enough to structure, and the **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing team** managed to do that for 9 teenagers. From brushing teeth, eating breakfast, leaving for school, motivating to study, following up on meetings with friends and extracurricular

activities to getting home on time and having dinner, every day the team has managed to give young people what they need most – the assurance that there is someone to take care of them in this house. Along with these duties, they also fought for documents to be issued for the young people, they were the teens' guardians, accompanied them to the doctor, found a job suitable for their daily life and gave them valuable advice. Perhaps it is difficult to imagine life and work in a residential social service, but for our specialists, achieving a balance with 9 teenagers in one place is the result of their high professionalism and qualification.

We are happy that among all these duties, the team has also been able to instill trust in the young people and encourage them to share their problems, as this is the basis of any success in social work. Being able to trust people that they are getting the right information, that someone is looking after them and that they will be supported is an invaluable skill that we deeply value in all our teams. That is why, even after the closure of **"Ropotamo" Transitional housing** as a social service, we kept the core of the team and are happy to see them in our other services, and they often tell us that they have heard from the young people who are still they share the most important things for them!





ANNUAL EXPENCES IN 2022	AMOUNT IN BGN	COSTS %
Living costs	316 000	11%
Transportation costs	82 500	3%
Other expenses	153 000	5%
Overheads	217 000	7%
Maintenance and reparations	62 500	2%
Inventory	45 500	2%
Taxes and insurances	63 000	2%
Personnel	2 012 000	68%
Total annual expenses of CONCORDIA Bulgaria Foundation	2 951 500	100%

Our revenues for 2022	3 160 000 BGN
Financing from CONCORDIA Social projects	1 832 000 BGN
Income from State delegated services	825 000 BGN
Donations	56 000 BGN
Project financing	397 000 BGN
Income from own social business	35 000 BGN
In-kind donations	15 000 BGN



AKNOWLEDGMENT

We are grateful to our donors, partners, supporting organizations and people!

Financial support and project financing:

Sofia Municipality	Robert Bosch EOOD	Area 05 District 30
OP Human Resource development	Merck Bulgaria	Zonta International
Medicor Foundation, Lichtenstein	BCNL and social entrepreneurship program Lets's go	ET Anka Dimova Katsarova
Ursula Zindel Hilti Foundation	RaiffeisenBank Bulgaria/ KBC Bank	Valdo 69 EOOD
Renovabis, Germany	European Bedding Company EAD	Domeksim EOOD
Active Citizens Fund of FM EEA	New Management EOOD	Petrus OOD
Good Mills Bulgaria EOOD	Hewlett Packard Enterprise	Ellatzitee MED AD
Trust for Social Achievement	Conimpact EOOD	Unicredit Bulbank AD
Billa Bulgaria EOOD	Smart Organic	Experian Bulgaria EAD
CBA Kome	A Data Pro OOD	SiteGround Hosting EOOD
Yettel.	PEPCO Bulgaria	Ingram Micro GBS EOOD
BCause Foundation and DMS donation platform	Endava EOOD	ORBIT EOOD

Non-financial and pro-bono support

Bulgarian Food Bank
 DB Events EOOD
 NGO Operation Teddy Bear
 BRVZ Strabag EOOD
 ICAP CRIF Bulgaria EAD
 Chipita Bulgaria AD
 Interfoods Bulgaria EAD
 Kaufland Bulgaria EAD
 National Sport Academy Vasil Levski
 Mediapost Hit Mail Bulgaria EOOD
 International Organization of Migration
 5th Medical Hospital for Active Treatment "Knyaginya Klementina" – Sofia EAD
 18th DC Centre Sofia EOOD

Clients, who trusted our social enterprises:

Austrian Embassy
 DB Events OOD
 BCNL
 Overgas AD
 Strabag EAD
 Mineral 2000 EOOD
 HTI Bulgaria EOOD
 Bulgarian Red Cross
 Bulgarian Biodiversity Foundation
 One Gift EOOD
 Diagal Print OOD
 Consendo OOD

Project – partners:

Sofia University
 59th School Vasil Levski
 Know-How Centre, New Bulgarian University
 179th Sintshech Kindergarten
 Muzeiko Foundation

Media talking for our social work:

Bulgarian National Radio
 BG on Air
 Nova News
 Darik Radio
 Marginalia.bg
 NPO Portal
www.nasoki.bg
www.uspelite.bg
www.stolica.bg
www.tbmagazine.net
www.offnews.bg



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