



## 29th COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS OF PRISON AND PROBATION SERVICES

**“Human Rights, Democracy and the Role of the Law at the  
heart of Prison and Probation”**

**Sofia, Bulgaria, 24-25 June 2024**



### **PRACTICAL INFORMATION**

#### **1. THE CONFERENCE**

- **DATE AND VENUE:** The 29th Council of Europe Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services will take place at Grand Hotel Millennium, (<https://grandhotelmillenniumsofia.bg/>) in Sofia, Bulgaria, starting at 09:30 a.m. on Monday 24 June, and closing at 12:30 p.m. on 25 June, followed by a visit at the new pilot prison, connected to a training center and a half way house in Samoranovo village. The Welcome reception will be held on the preceding evening, starting at 7.00 p.m. on Sunday 23 June 2024 at restaurant Vodenitsata (<https://vodenitzata.com/>). The gala dinner will be on 24 June, starting at 8 p.m. at Grand Hotel Millennium.
- **WORKING LANGUAGES:** The working languages of the Conference will be English, French and Bulgarian with simultaneous interpretation during the plenary sessions and in one of the three parallel workshops. Some of the workshops will be repeated in order to allow for more participants to attend the different workshops and for providing simultaneous interpretation during most of them.
- **REGISTRATION:** The Conference is open to invited participants only. Each participant in the Conference has to register using the online registration form available on the Conference website ([www.coe.int/cdpps2024](http://www.coe.int/cdpps2024)) **before 15 May 2023.**
- **WORKING DOCUMENTS:** All working documents of the Conference will be posted on the Conference website which will be regularly updated. Please note that no working documents will be printed out and distributed during the Conference.

## 2. GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Grand Hotel Millennium Sofia** is located in the heart of the city at a walking distance from the vibrant city center area filled with iconic historical and cultural sights, vast green parks and numerous government institutions.

For your convenience, we are providing the hotel's name and address in English and Bulgarian. The Bulgarian address may be shown to taxi drivers or used for any other transportation needs.

***Grand Hotel Millennium Sofia  
89B, Vitosha Blvd., 1463 Sofia, Bulgaria***

***Гранд Хотел Милениум София  
1463 София, Бул. Витоша 89Б***

- **Reaching the Grand Hotel Millennium Sofia**

**The host has arranged two airport transfers, departing from Sofia airport, Terminal 2 for the venue at 12:30 p.m and 3:30 p.m.**

### **ACCESS BY SOFIA METRO**



If you are arriving at Sofia Airport you can easily reach the hotel using the Sofia Metro. Sofia Airport metro station is located next to Terminal 2.

Make an easy switch at Serdika station to Line 2 for one more stop at the National Palace of Culture (NDK) station. After that it is nearly impossible to miss the hotel - rising high above the city right behind the National Palace of Culture. Just look up.



Travel Time from Sofia Airport - approx. 40 minutes

If you are arriving at the *Central Railway station* or *the Central Bus Station* you can get on the Sofia Metro from Central Railway station for 2 stops arriving at the National Palace of Culture (NDK) station.

Travel Time from Central Bus/Railway station - Approx. 10-15 minutes

Public transport ticket costs 1,60 BGN (~ 0,80 EUR) one way or 4,00 BGN (~ 2,00 EUR) for the day and can be purchased at kiosks or at ticket machines. Contactless payment is possible for travel on public transport in Sofia. Normal running hours are 5 a.m to 12 p.m.

## ARRIVING BY TAXI FROM SOFIA AIRPORT

Travel Time - Approx. 25-30 minutes

Distance - 13 km.

As you exit Sofia Airport's Arrival Hall (Terminal 2), the official taxi stand is on the right. It is best to take a taxi from there, and have some cash prepared, as many do not accept credit cards. The official taxi company at the airport is Yellow Taxi. Look for the Yellow cars at the main taxi rank or request the service at the offices of Yellow in the Arrival of Terminal 2.



Beware of random taxi drivers offering rides in the airport, as there are many with abnormally high prices.

The average rate for a ride from airport to the venue should be around 30 - 40 BGN (~ 15 - 20 EUR).

- **WEATHER:** The weather in Sofia in June: the low temperature is around 13°C and the high temperature is around of 25°C. The weather is pleasantly warm but can be a bit rainy, so keep that in mind as you pack.
- **CURRENCY:** Bulgarian's currency is the lev (BGN) and it is the only currency accepted as cash. At most places, you can also pay with credit cards. All commonly used credit cards, i.e. MasterCard, Visa and American Express, are accepted. Bulgarian lev (BGN) is pegged to the EURO at 1.96 per 1 EUR.
- **ELECTRIC CURRENT:** The nominal voltage of electricity in Bulgaria is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz, comparable to most of the countries of the European Union. The power sockets are of type F.

Voltage: 230V

Frequency: 50 Hz

Plugs: Type F

- **DIALING CODE:** The dialling code for Bulgaria is +359.
- **MEDICAL CARE:** In the case of a serious medical emergency, phone 112 for an ambulance.
- **PASSPORTS AND VISAS:** A valid passport (or identity card for European Community nationals) is required. Visas are not necessary for citizens of EU countries, the U.S.A., Canada and the majority of countries. Please contact your local Bulgarian Embassy/Consulate or your Travel Agency for further information.
- **RECREATION:** The history of Sofia, Bulgaria's capital and largest city, spans thousands of years from Antiquity to modern times, during which the city has been a commercial, industrial, cultural and economic centre in its region and the Balkans.

- **SIGHTSEEING:**

- **St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral** is Bulgarian Orthodox cathedral at the heart of Sofia. Built in Neo-Byzantine style, it is one of the biggest Eastern Orthodox cathedrals in the world, as well as one of Sofia's symbols and primary tourist attractions.
  - **National Palace of Culture**, also called NDK, opened in 1981 and is a cultural center for conferences and exhibitions. It is an impressive building, situated in a beautiful park near the Grand Hotel Millennium Sofia.
  - **The Rotunda of St. Georgi** was built in the 3rd century AD as pagan temple and is the oldest preserved structure in Sofia. The Rotunda is located at the city center in the courtyard of the Presidency.
  - **Ancient Serdica Complex** is remarkable, partly covered excavation site, situated just above the Serdica metro station, displays the remains of the Roman city, Serdica, that once occupied this area.
- **SALES / TAX:** Sales tax (VAT) is included in prices quoted.
  - **SECURITY:** Sofia is the largest and most populous city in Bulgaria and is generally safe for visitors.
  - **SHOPPING:** Most of the stores, malls and supermarkets in Sofia are usually open between 8, 9 or 10 a.m. and 8, 9 or 10 p.m. Some supermarkets already open their doors at 7 a.m.
  - **SMOKING:** Smoking is forbidden by law in closed areas. People may freely smoke in open public areas and in restaurants' open-air sections.
  - **WATER** - the tap water is safe to drink.