



CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER RESPONSE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

2016 COE Legal Advisors (LEGAD) Workshop



INFO PACKAGE
BULGARIA, SOFIA
23-25 February 2016

I GENERAL INFORMATION



Here is some useful information to assist your visit.

VENUE:

Arena di Serdica Residence Hotel
2 Budapesta Str., Sofia 1000, Bulgaria

Strategically located in the downtown, it is right next to historical places of interest. During the early construction works of what came to be the Arena di Serdica Hotel, the ancient amphitheater of Roman town of Serdica was accidentally discovered in 2004. In the modern cityscape of Sofia, the ruins lie south of Knjaz Dondukov Blvd, between the Goethe-Institut headquarters and the embassy of the United Kingdom.

In July 2006 came across further ruins, not clear that the unearthed Roman indeed part of a large arena. The east section of the amphitheater within the preserved and incorporated into the floor. It is freely accessible for tourists except on Mondays, and includes small coins and ceramics unearthed on the



however, it was structure was gate and the hotel lot was hotel's ground during the day, expositions of site.

POC:

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The Workshop language will be English and interpretation services to and from other languages will not be provided.

Remark:

Please, fill in the registration form (at www.cmdrcoe.org)

Arriving in Sofia

A valid passport is required for entry to Bulgaria. Participants from EU countries can use ID cards instead. It is required non-EU citizens to obtain a visa and is kindly recommended to contact with the Embassy/Consulate of the Republic of Bulgaria in their respective country.



There are direct flights to Sofia from the biggest European airports. Generally, the international flights land at Terminal 2 of Sofia Airport. The drive from there to the city center is a short one and should not take more than 30 minutes.

Both Sofia`s Central Rail Station and the International Bus Station are located close to the downtown.

If arriving by car, be aware of the numerous speed traps at the entrances to the city as you will end up with a not insignificant spot fine.

Local Transport

The taxi services in Sofia are cheap and reliable and there is a small percentage of frauds, however check the prices before you enter the cab to avoid misleading. The taxi should not be more than 20-25 BGN for a ride to the central parts of Sofia. The payment should be made in Bulgarian currency only. You can change a small amount of money at the airport or use the ATM. All taxis are colored in yellow and operate by meter – it`s worth checking if the meter is on. The reputable companies are OK Supertrans, Eurolease, Yes and Yellow333, and the CMDR COE strongly recommends their services. Their cabs are recognizable by their call-centers always well shown on vehicle`s sides.



The public transport in Sofia is composed of buses, trolley and tram networks and an underground as well. The services run from 5 am to midnight. Single-journey ticket costs 1.00 BGN and can be bought from street kiosks at the stops or from the driver. Ticket must be validated on board using the metal punchers near the windows. A single-trip ticket may be issued by on-board vending machine in trams and trolleys for each journey. The metro tickets have the same price (1.00 BGN) but are different from those used in ground transport, and can only be purchased from ticket counters in the underground stations.

To avoid rush hours best way is to run downtown on a tube train as shown on the pics.



Miscellaneous

CLIMATE: The weather in the end of February`2016 is expected to be cloudy with a little drizzle as the day temperatures to vary between -5 to 0°C in the morning to 5-6°C at noon.

LOCAL TIME: EET (UTC+2) between late October and late March.

CURRENCY: Bulgarian unit of currency is the Lev (pl. leva), code – BGN. It is in fraction of 100 *stotinki* (singular: *stotinka*). The denomination is coin of 1 lev and banknotes of 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 levs. The exchange rate against the euro is fixed at BGN 1.95583 for €1 as in 1999 the Lev`s value was pegged to that of the German deutschmark, which was replaced by the euro in 2001. Since then due to the Currency Board it is easy to calculate the rate – it lasts BGN to € as 2:1.

EXCHANGE: Many international banks and Foreign-Exchange Offices operate in Sofia. Currency exchange at the airport on arrival or departure, and in the hotels, is also possible. Do not exchange money in the streets or outside financial offices despite the bargain rate offered: you risk being cheated!

BANKING HOURS: Monday to Friday, 09:00 – 17:00. Most of Foreign-Exchange Offices are open until 6 PM, and some around the clock. For more information on the actual rates it is better to consult with the Bulgarian National Bank (BNB) website: www.bnb.bg. Most of the banks have very friendly web portals where can find concerning information as well as the location of their ATMs.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS: International direct-dialing access code for Bulgaria: 359, for Sofia: 359 2. Cell phones are widely available where mobile services are provided by three operators—MTel, Telenor and VivaCOM. Another one is MaxTelecom however it is specialized in Wi-Fi supply.

DRINKING WATER: Tap water is safe to drink but not always pleasant in taste or appearance. Bulgaria's vast supplies of mineral water are widely available in 0.5 litre and 1.5 litre bottles. They are very tasty and not expensive. Stick to well-known brands such as Gorna Banya, Devin or Bankia and check that the bottles are properly sealed.

ELECTRICITY: Main voltage 220 V/50 Hz, round two-pin plugs.

MOTORING: Drive on the right, overtake on the left, cross only when the traffic light is green, give right of way to vehicles approaching from the right at crossroads and to buses in urban areas, carry your International Driving Permit, ride with lights on at all times. The use of seat belts is mandatory for all passengers, except pregnant women. Speed limits are 50 km/h urban, 90 km/h outside and 130 km/h highways.

EMERGENCY: CALL 112.

Useful web links:

www.cmdrcoe.org
www.discover-bulgaria.com/
www.sofia.bg
www.sofiatraffic.bg/en/
www.sofia-guide.com/
www.bgmaps.com/en
www.weather.sinoptik.bg

II ACCOMMODATION

There will be a block booking for all participants in the workshop.

Arena Di Serdica*****

Arena di Serdica is a 5-star Residence Hotel, affiliated to the FPI Hotels & Resorts chain. It is the only place in Sofia where hotel hospitality and historical heritage are combined. The property houses an ancient ruins dating from the end of the 3rd century. At that moment in the past Sofia (then named Serdica) was the capital of the Roman province Dacia Mediterranea.



Special rates for the 2016 COE Legal Advisors Workshop have been arranged. A single room is €99 per night including VAT and Taxes, double room €120, small suit €140. Free Wi-Fi, fitness and parking are provided.

Please note the **deadline for hotel booking is:**

JANUARY 30th, 2016

Note: The Registration Form (www.cmdrcoe.org) is sufficient for accommodation purposes.

Please address all accommodation issues to POCs

Terms & Conditions: *Your reservation is absolutely secure. All personal data is encrypted and will be processed in a secure manner.*

III ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Conference fee:

A conference fee in amount of 100 EUR per person will be collected on the first day during the in-processing. Please ensure you bring the conference fee in cash (EUR) as we will be unable to accept payment by credit card.

Dining:

All participants are invited to a hosted icebreaker to be hold at Arena di Serdica Residence Hotel on the evening of 23rd of February at 1900.

The lunch will be provided in the hotel facilities during the lunch breaks.

All participants are invited to a hosted diner to be hold at Panorama Restaurant on the evening of 24th of February at 1900.

Cultural event:

On 25th of February from 1530 to 1900 a guided tour around the city center of Sofia will be provided to all participants of the Conference.

Please to confirm in the registration form if you will participate in any of above mentioned events