



JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE  
ISUSOVAČKA SLUŽBA ZA IZBJEGLICE



P A T H S  
S T A Z E

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پيچل  
مسارات

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IZDAVAČ: Jesuit Refugee Service  
Isusovačka služba za izbjeglice

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Staze su Vaše novine.  
Ako želite podijeliti svoju priču sa nama  
potražite ljude iz JRS tima i oni će  
se pobrinuti da se Vaš glas čuje.

***Dobro nam došli!***  
Vaš **JRS BiH** tim

The Paths are your newspaper.  
If you want to share your story with us,  
seek out the JRS team and they  
will make sure your voice is heard.

***Welcome!***  
Your **JRS BiH** team

عن أشد  
صوتك وسيروصو على JRS لقصك معذ ، فابج  
سماع



## PRAYER

*God, Father Almighty, grant us the grace to work tirelessly for justice, solidarity and peace, so that all your children may enjoy the freedom to choose whether to migrate or to stay.*

*Grant us the courage to denounce all the horrors of our world, and to combat every injustice that mars the beauty of your children and the harmony of our common home.*

*Sustain us by the power of your Spirit, so that we can reflect your tender love to every migrant whom you place in our path, and to spread in hearts and in every situation the culture of encounter and of care.*

Pope Francis

*JRS BiH outreach team in the field with migrants pushed back from the Croatian border.*

## MOLITVA

*Bože, svemogući Oče, daj nam milost da se revno zalažemo za pravdu, solidarnost i mir, kako bi se svoj tvojoj djeci zajamčio slobodan izbor između iseljavanja i ostanka.*

*Daj nam hrabrosti da osudimo sve strahote našega svijeta i ustanemo protiv svake nepravde koja nagrđuje ljepotu tvojih stvorenja i narušava sklad našeg zajedničkog doma.*

*Krijepi nas snagom svoga Duha, kako bismo tvoju nježnost očitovali svakom migrantu kojega dovedeš na naš put te u svojim srcima i u svakoj sredini širili kulturu susreta i skrbi.*

Papa Franjo

*Volunteer coordinator Emina Hošić is visiting people who are residing outside the temporary reception centers with the volunteers.*



## THE WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS

The origins of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees can be traced to 1914, a few months before the outbreak of World War I. Touched by the drama of millions of Italians who had migrated abroad since the beginning of the 20th century, Pope Pius X called on all Christians to pray for migrants.

A few months later, his successor Pope Benedict XV instituted the Day of the Migrant to support spiritually and economically the pastoral work for Italian emigrants. In 1952, Migrant Day took on a broader and more international connotation and the particular Churches were called upon to choose a date to celebrate the day during the liturgical year.

St. John Paul II was the first pontiff who, since 1985, has issued a message each year drawing attention to some of the specific realities and difficulties of people on the move, calling the Church to action.

In 2004, the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People extended the day to refugees calling it the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

At the behest of St. John Paul II, since 2005, the World Day of Migrants and Refugees has been celebrated by the Universal Church on the 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany.

On the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, January 14, 2018, Pope Francis announced the change in the date of celebration which will be the last Sunday of September.

Magazin o stranicma u BiH / Magazine on foreigners in BiH

*Pope Francis solemnly unveils the 'Angels Unaware' monument by Timothy Schmalz dedicated to migrants on the occasion of World Day of Migrants and Refugees. Source: Vatican media*



## MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 109th WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES 2023

Dear brothers and sisters!

The migratory flows of our times are the expression of a complex and varied phenomenon that, to be properly understood, requires a careful analysis of every aspect of its different stages, from departure to arrival, including the possibility of return. As a contribution to this effort, I have chosen to devote the Message for the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees to the freedom that should always mark the decision to leave one's native land.

"Free to leave, free to stay" was the title of an initiative of solidarity promoted several years ago by the Italian Episcopal Conference as a concrete response to the challenges posed by contemporary migration movements. From attentive listening to the Particular Churches, I have come to see that ensuring that that freedom is a widely shared pastoral concern.

*"An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him'"* (Mt 2:13). The flight of the Holy Family into Egypt was not the result of a free decision, nor were many of the migrations that marked the history of the people of Israel. The decision to migrate should always be free, yet in many cases, even in our day, it is not.

Conflicts, natural disasters, or more simply the impossibility of living a dignified and prosperous life in one's native land is forcing millions of persons to leave. Already in 2003, Saint John Paul II stated that "as regards migrants and refugees, building conditions of peace means in practice being seriously committed to safeguarding first of all the right not to emigrate, that is, the right to live in peace and dignity in one's own country" (Message for the 90th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 3).

*"They took their livestock and the goods that they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and they came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him"* (Gen 46:6). A grave famine forced Jacob and his entire family to seek refuge in Egypt, where his son Joseph ensured their survival. Persecutions, wars, atmospheric phenomena and dire poverty are among the most visible causes of forced migrations today. Migrants flee because of poverty, fear or desperation. Eliminating these causes and thus putting an end to forced migration calls for shared commitment on the part of all, in accordance with the responsibilities of each. This commitment begins with asking what we can do, but also what we need to stop doing. We need to make every effort to halt the arms race, economic colonialism, the plundering of other people's resources and the devastation of our common home.

*"All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need"* (Acts 2:44-45). The ideal of the first Christian community seems so distant from today's reality! To make migration a choice that is truly free, efforts must be made to ensure to everyone an equal share in the common good, respect for his or her fundamental rights, and access to an integral human development. Only in this way will we be able to offer to each person the possibility of a dignified and fulfilling life, whether individually or within families. Clearly, the principal responsibility falls to the countries of origin and their leaders, who are called to practice a good politics – one that is transparent, honest, farsighted and at the service of all, especially those most vulnerable. At the same time, they must be empowered to do this, without finding themselves robbed of their natural and human resources and without outside interference aimed at serving the interests of a few. Where circumstances make possible a decision either to migrate or to stay, there is a need to ensure that the decision be well informed and carefully considered, in order to avoid great numbers of men, women and children falling victim to perilous illusions or unscrupulous traffickers.

*"In this year of jubilee, you shall return, every one of you, to your property"* (Lev 25:13). For the people of Israel, the celebration of the jubilee year represented an act of collective justice: "everyone was allowed to return to their original situation, with the cancellation of all debts, restoration of the land, and an opportunity once more to enjoy the freedom proper to the members of the People of God" (Catechesis, 10 February 2016). As we approach the Holy Year of 2025, we do well to remember this aspect of the jubilee celebrations. Joint efforts are needed by individual countries and the international community to ensure that all enjoy the right not to be forced to emigrate, in other words, the chance to live in peace and with dignity in one's own country. This right has yet to be codified, but it is one of fundamental importance, and its protection must be seen as a shared responsibility on the part of all States with respect to a common good that transcends national borders. Indeed, since the world's resources are not unlimited, the development of the economically poorer countries depends on the capacity for sharing that we can manage to generate among all countries. Until this right is guaranteed – and here we are speaking of a long process – many people will still have to emigrate in order to seek a better life.

*"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me"* (Mt 25:35-36). These words are a constant admonition to see in the migrant not simply a brother or sister in difficulty, but Christ himself, who knocks at our door.



## Reflection on the Pope's Messages for World Day of Migrants and Refugees

Together with our beneficiaries from the temporary reception center in Blažuj, under the guidance of psychologist Dženeta Bašović, we engaged in a reflective session inspired by the Pope's words for World Day of Migrants and Refugees. In an effort to ease discussions on challenging topics, we utilized a creative approach. As we collectively shaped wall ornaments using wooden sticks and templates, a new perspective on the complex issue emerged. Throughout the creative process, facilitated by our psychologist, we delved into the profound topic of why individuals leave their countries of origin. Emphasizing the Pope's slogan for World Day of Migrants and Refugees, "Free to Choose - To Migrate or to Stay," we aimed to understand and reflect on the various reasons compelling people to flee, such as war, violence, hunger, and undemocratic regimes. The therapeutic power of artistic expression became evident as we utilized it to communicate, connect, and share life experiences. In this creative space, we grew closer, providing mutual support. We utilized art not only as a means of self-expression but also as a tool to foster empathy and deeper understanding among us.



## PET GODINA SUOSJEĆANJA NAŠ PUT S IZBJEGLICAMA I MIGRANTIMA

Uz Svjetski dan migranata i izbjeglica, proslavili smo i početak našeg putovanja sa izbjeglicama i migrantima. Naše putovanje s njima navršilo je pet godina. Od ponovnog pokretanja naših aktivnosti u BiH 12. srpnja 2018. godine, uz neprocjenjivu podršku volontera iz JRS Hrvatske, krećemo na misiju suosjećanja i solidarnosti. Naše putovanje počelo je pripremama i čišćenjem prihvatnih centara poput Sedre, a ubrzo smo proširili našu ponudu na usluge prijevoda u ključnim institucijama poput zdravstvenih ustanova, policije i sudova. No naša predanost išla je dalje od prijevoda. Postali smo pratitelji u najvažnijim trenucima života naših korisnika. Pružali smo nužnu psihosocijalnu podršku unutar centara i poboljšavali njihovu kvalitetu života distribucijom odjeće i obuće i drugih potrepština na terenu. paketa i drugih potrepština na terenu. Otvaranje Dnevnog centra u Bihaću označio je značajan korak naprijed, pružajući korisnicima prilike za sudjelovanje u različitim aktivnostima, pripremu tradicionalnih obroka, pristupu čistoj odjeći i obući iz našeg skladišta i uživanje u kvalitetnom vremenu tijekom dana. Tijekom ovih pet godina aktivno smo sudjelovali u događanjima koji su promovirali integraciju izbjeglica u lokalnu zajednicu i povezivali lokalnu zajednicu s našim korisnicima, kao što su festivali ulične hrane i organizacija koncerta talijanske benda GenRosso. Također smo preuzeli ulogu edukatora, projekcijama filmova o iskustvima izbjeglica među školskom djecom i studentima kako bismo potaknuli razumijevanje i empatiju. Kao vrhunac naših nastojanja, otvorili smo Prihvatni centar za maloljetnike bez pratnje tražitelje azila ranjivu/odvojenu djecu, u suradnji s Caritasom Švicarske, Caritasom BiH i Ipsijom BiH. Ponosni smo i na naš časopis "Staze" za izbjeglice



The celebration of the World Day of Migrants and Refugees and five years of JRS at the Lipa camp



## PET GODINA SUOSJEĆANJA NAŠ PUT S IZBJEGLICAMA I MIGRANTIMA

Kroz ovu publikaciju dijelimo priče, iskustva i perspektive izbjeglica, educirajući širu javnost o njihovim životima i izazovima. Naša predanost podizanju svijesti nije se zaustavila samo na tome. Aktivno smo prikupljali priče izbjeglica kroz pričanje priča, ciljajući senzibilizirati lokalnu zajednicu i širu javnost na borbe i nade izbjeglica, potičući razumijevanje i empatiju. U rujnu 2022. pokrenuli smo našu radijsku emisiju "Blagoslov putnika", pružajući platformu za razgovore s izbjeglicama kako bi podijelili svoje priče i iskustva, promovirajući međukulturno razumijevanje. Naš uspjeh i utjecaj duguju se nepokolebljivoj podršci i povjerenju naših posvećenih volontera i podržavatelja. Zajedno nastavljamo hodati prema svjetlijoj budućnosti. Svojih pet godina misije sa izbjeglicama i migrantima te Svjetski dan izbjeglica i migranata proslavili smo na svim mjestima na kojima služimo, zagovarano i podržavamo naše korisnike, posebno u privremenim prihvatnim centrima u Bihaću i Sarajevu. Zajedno smo kuhali tradicionalnu hranu iz Maroka i Afganistana, plesali, pjevali, sudjelovali u sportskim aktivnostima. Svako ljudsko biće traži dom, sigurnost, zaštitu, prijateljstvo, razumijevanje i podršku. Naši skromni doprinosi na njihovom dugom i izazovnom putovanju imali su za cilj pružiti osjećaj doma, obilježje razumijevanja i dar prijateljstva. Trudili smo se biti njihova radost i snaga koja ih potiče da idu dalje. Nadamo se da smo u tome uspješni. Ova proslava snažno podsjeća, kako naše korisnike, tako i nas, da nisu sami. Tu smo za njih, i zajedno stojimo u solidarnosti, promovirajući jedinstvo i inkluziju na našem zajedničkom putu.

*"Kroz različite projekte dotaknuli smo živote tisuće ljudi nudeći im ne samo materijalnu podršku, već i nadu, razumijevanje i mogućnost novog početka"*

Vedran Mihić, voditelj ureda JRS-a BiH.



## FIVE YEARS OF COMPASSION OUR JOURNEY WITH REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

On World Day of Migrants and Refugees, we celebrated the beginning of our journey with refugees and migrants. Our journey with them has now reached its fifth year.

Since our reestablishment on July 12, 2018, with invaluable support from dedicated volunteers from JRS Croatia, we embarked on a mission of compassion and solidarity. Our journey began with preparations and cleaning of temporary reception centers like Sedra, and soon we expanded our activities to translation services in key institutions such as healthcare facilities, police, and courts.

However, our commitment went beyond translation. We became companions in the most crucial moments of our beneficiaries lives. We provided essential psychosocial support within the centers and improved their quality of life by distributing hygiene kits and other necessities in the field.

The opening of the Day Center at JRS House in Bihać marked a significant step forward, offering beneficiaries opportunities to engage in various activities, prepare traditional meals, access clean clothing and footwear from our storage, and enjoy quality time during the day.

Over these five years, we actively participated in events that promoted the integration of refugees into the local community and connected the local community with our beneficiaries, such as street food festivals and concerts organized by the Italian band GenRosso. We also took on the role of educators, screening films about refugees; fostering positive experiences among school children and students to encourage understanding and empathy.

As the culmination of our efforts, we opened Reception Center for Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers and Vulnerable/Separated Children in collaboration with Caritas Switzerland, Caritas BiH, and Ipsia BiH.

We are also proud of our magazine "Paths", launched in October 2019. Through this publication, we share stories, experiences, and perspectives of refugees, educating the wider public about their lives and challenges. Our commitment to raising awareness did not stop there. We actively collected refugee stories through storytelling, aiming to sensitize the local community and the broader public to the struggles and hopes of refugees, fostering understanding and empathy.

In September, we launched our radio show "Blessing of Travelers", providing a platform for conversations with refugees to share their stories and experiences, promoting intercultural understanding. Our success and impact are owed to the unwavering support and trust of our dedicated volunteers and supporters. Together, we continue to walk towards a brighter future. We celebrated our five years of mission with refugees and migrants and World Day of Migrants and Refugees at all the places where we serve, advocate, and support our beneficiaries, especially in temporary reception centers in Bihać and Sarajevo.

Together, we cooked traditional food from Morocco and Afghanistan, danced, sang, and participated in sports activities. Every human being seeks a home, safety, protection, friendship, understanding, and support. Our modest contributions on their long and challenging journey aimed to provide a sense of home, abundant understanding, and the gift of friendship. We strove to be their joy and strength that encourages them to go on. We hope we have succeeded in that. This celebration serves as a powerful reminder, both to our beneficiaries and to us, that they are not alone. We are here for them, standing together in solidarity, promoting unity and inclusion on our shared path.

*"Through various projects, we have touched the lives of thousands of people, offering them not only material support but also hope, understanding, and the opportunity for a fresh start" - Vedran Mihić, JRS BiH Country manager.*





## BLAZUJ WHERE FRIENDSHIP AND ART FLOURISH

In our work with beneficiaries, we often utilize the transformative power of art because it relaxes us, connects us, keeps us engaged, opens up new perceptions, in other words, it heals in its own way. It leaves behind a beautiful mark, a lasting reminder that we have done something beautiful and useful. So, at camp Blazuj in Sarajevo, we have enriched our space with some new installations, some new works. First, we started with the beautification of our hair salon. It's a place our clients visit very happily and very often. That's why, together with our clients, we shaped and decorated clay into beautiful ornaments because we wanted to infuse a bit of soul, beauty, and warmth into our hair salon at camp Blazuj. Art brought us closer, filled our time with fun, and revealed hidden talents. Such art therapies mean a lot to us personally. We will always remember our dear clients and friends for the beauty and goodness they brought into our lives with their presence.

After the hair salon, in collaboration with IOM and with the help of our clients and volunteers, we designed and created a mural near the Social Corner and the kitchen. Sometimes, we organize creative workshops that help us release and acknowledge different emotions, like the "Packing My Suitcase" workshop. We asked our friends: "What would you take with you to a new home, to a new country, for a fresh start?" It was interesting to see the diverse and imaginative answers from our clients. At the same time, it was sad because the reasons they packed their suitcases and embarked on such a distant, uncertain journey were conflicts, insecurity, poverty, and lack of prospects.

We are here to at least temporarily lighten the burden they carry, even if through play, as it ultimately leads to serious conversations. So, we travel together, share difficulties, and instill new strength for new beginnings. One such workshop was the "Essence of Friendship. Writing Letters" workshop. Our clients had the task of describing what friendship means to them in just three words, and then they wrote letters to their friends. Some wrote letters to their close friends, some expressed their feelings in verses, and some wrote to their mothers. It was a moment when we realized how lonely people on the move can be and the painful farewells, they carry within them. And once again, we are here for them, to alleviate loneliness and long-lasting suffering. In addition to creative workshops, we also conduct educational workshops, such as resume writing, encouraging individuals not to lose sight of their dreams. All their talents will be appreciated someday. Because their resilience in the face of challenges, the racism they encounter, and the hardships of their journey are truly remarkable. These workshops are not only educational but also supportive, nurturing optimism and hope, both theirs and ours.



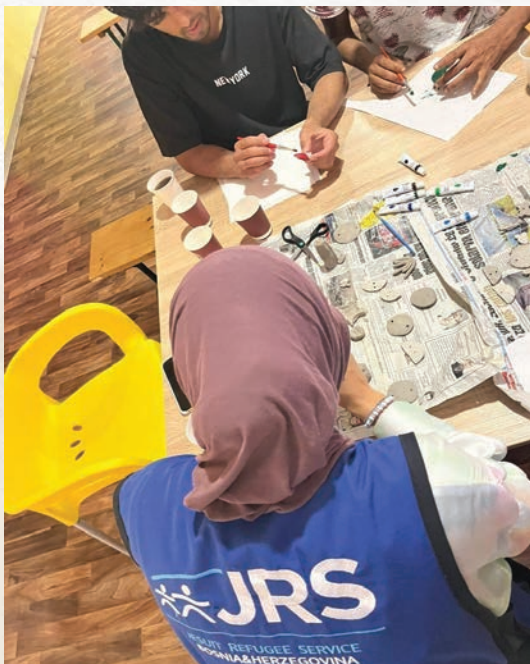
## BLAŽUJ

### TAMO GDJE PRIJATELJSTVO I UMJETNOST CVJETAJU

U našem radu sa korisnicima često se služimo transformirajućom snagom umjetnosti. Jer ona nas opušta, povezuje, čini zauzetima, otvara neke nove percepcije, drugim riječima, na neki svoj način liječi. Iza nas ostavlja lijep trag, trajan podsjetnik, da smo nešto lijepo i korisno učinili. Tako smo kamp Blažuj u Sarajevu obogatili nekim novim instalacijama, nekim novim djelima. Prvo, krenuli smo sa uređivanjem frizerskog salona. Mjesto je to koje naši korisnici vrlo rado i vrlo često posjećuju. I upravo zbog toga, zajedno sa korisnicima smo oblikovali i oslikavali glinu u predivne ukrase, jer smo željeli našem frizerskom salonu u kamp Blažuj udahnuti malo duše, malo ljepote i malo topline. Umjetnost nas je približila, ispunila vrijeme zabavom i otkrila skrivene talente. I za nas same ovakve art terapije puno znače. Uvijek ćemo se sjećati naših dragih korisnika i prijatelja po ljepoti i dobroti koju su nam donijeli svojim prisustvom.

Nakon frizerskog, u suradnji sa IOM i uz pomoć naših korisnika i volontera osmislili smo i izradili prekrasan mural u blizini Društvenog kutka i kuhinje. Ponekad organiziramo kreativne radionice uz koje lakše otpuštamo i priznajemo različite emocije poput radionice: "Pakiram svoj kovčeg!" Upitali smo naše prijatelje: "Što biste ponijeli sa sobom u novi dom, u novu zemlju, za novi početak?" Bilo je zanimljivo vidjeti raznovrsne i maštovite odgovore naših korisnika. Istovremeno, bilo je i tužno, jer razlozi zašto su spakirali svoje kovčege i pošli na tako dalek, nesiguran put su sukobi, nesigurnost, siromaštvo, besperspektivnost.

Mi smo tu da im barem na trenutak olakšamo teret koji nose. Pa makar i kroz igru, jer i ona u konačnici posluži za ozbiljne razgovore. I tako zajedno putujemo i djelimo poteškoće, ulijevamo novu snagu za nove početke. Jedna od takvih radionica bila je: "Bit prijateljstva. Pisanje pisama". Naši su korisnici imali zadatak opisati što prijateljstvo znači za njih u samo tri riječi, a onda su pisali pisma svojim prijateljima. Neki su napisali pisma svojim bliskim prijateljima, neki su stihovima izrazili svoje osjećaje, a neki su pisali svojim mamama. Trenutak je to u kojem smo shvatili koliko su ljudi u pokretu usamljeni, i kakve sve bolne rastanke nose u sebi. I opet smo tu za njih, da ublažimo samoću i dugotrajnu patnju. Uz kreativne, provodimo i edukativne radionice poput pisanja životpisa, potičući pojedince da ne izgube iz vida svoje snove. Svi njihovi talenti bit će jednog dana cijenjeni. Jer zadivljujuća je njihova otpornost pred izazovima, s razumom s kojim se suočavaju i težinom svoga putovanja. Ove radionice nisu samo edukativne, već i podržavajuće, njegujući optimizam i nadu. I njihovu i našu.



## MISIJA IZVAN KAMPOVA

Naše djelovanje počinje tamo gdje borave izbjeglice u BiH. A osim privremenih prihvatnih centara njihov su dom bili i napušteni, devastirani objekti. Ponekad su to tek prolazne, tranzitne stanice, uz put, na nekoj livadi, ili u trenutku nasilnog vraćanja sa granice. Isusovačka služba za izbjeglice u BiH pruža potporu migrantima i izbjeglicama koji borave na otvorenom bez pitke vode, hrane, sanitarnih uvjeta, medicinske skrbi i struje. Naš tim kulturnih posrednika/prevoditelja i volontera je kroz redovite odlaske na teren na području Bihaća i Velike Kladuše te mapiranje ranjivih kategorija dijelio prehrambene i neprehrambene artikle korisnicima u improviziranim kampovima i napuštenim kućama. Distribucija je vršena direktno iz našeg skladišta.

Pri tome, nismo im dijelili samo neophodnu humanitarnu pomoć, nego razumijevanje i podršku. Ti susreti su bili prilika za razmjenu iskustava, dijeljenje priča, stvaranje prijateljstava. Zajedno smo kuhali, zajedno čistili i uređivali lokacije na kojima borave. Dio njihovih priča i iskustava je dokumentiran kroz zagovaračke tekstove i objavljen na različitim web portalima u BiH i Hrvatskoj. Na taj su način svojim životima zagovarali sebe kao i svoje sunarodnjake i sve izbjeglice na tzv. Balkanskoj ruti koji se suočavaju sa istom patnjom. Njihovo iskustvo učestalog nasilja na granici kod prisilnih, ilegalnih odvajanja sa granice također se bilježi i dokumentira u cilju informiranja šire javnosti i medija sa opasnostima s kojima se susreću.

U mjesecu rujnu i listopadu 2023. zabilježeno je 700 nasilnih povrataka, prilikom odlaska na teren, u susretu sa izbjeglicama koje su nakon odvajanja sa granice zatražili prijevoz i smještaj u kamp. U tim svjedočanstvima se navodi kako su žrtve psihičkog ili fizičkog nasilja od strane hrvatske policije, da su im oduzeti mobiteli, novac, obuća. Ponekad bi nas znali dočekati bosi ljudi, mokre odjeće, jer ih je policija tjerala da prelaze rijeku, ili bi nas zatekli muškarci koji su pred nama sakrivali suze. Nekad s vidljivim frakturama noge, nekad s vidnim fizičkim povredama, s bolovima u leđima, u potrebi za medicinskom njegom. Ljudi koji bi se otežano kretali zbog iscrpljenosti i bolova u nogama. Maloljetne osobe koje bi zatekli na terenu, također su svjedočili da su žrtve fizičkog i psihičkog nasilja te nasilnog oduzimanja, stvari, mobitela, novaca.

### Ovo su samo neka od svjedočanstava:

*"Nakon što su nas uhvatili prilikom prelaska granice, smjestili su nas u skučen prostor, i povremeno nas posjećivali s pitanjima: jeste li gladni? Kad bismo rekli da jesmo, oni bi se nasmijali i rekli: Za vas nema hrane."*

*"Prijetili su nam pištoljima. Oduzeli su nam obuću i mobitele, bacili na hrpu i zapalili. Novac su sebi stavili u džep. Onda su nas natjerali da bosimo hodamo po neasfaltiranoj cesti, repetirali pištolje na nas i natjerali nas da pregazimo rijeku."*

### Isječak iz teksta "Što je čovjek?" autorice Roberte Nikšić

*"...Nismo mi svjesni svojih predrasuda, niti dobro razumijemo jezik kojim nas obasipaju mediji. Kada kažu recimo ilegalni migranti, ili pritisak na granici, ili kad kažu: to još nigdje nema, čim pređu granicu ilegalno, imaju sve beneficije. Što to zapravo znači? Kako se odgovara na pritisak? Naravno, potiškom. Što je suprotno beneficijama?"*

Samo u rujnu i početkom listopada ove je godine najmanje sedamsto ljudi vraćenih sa hrvatske granice zatražilo smještaj i prijevoz do kampa Lipa, udaljenog trideset kilometara od Bihaća ili do porodičnog kampa Borići u Bihaću. Svi su bili žrtve nekog oblika zlostavljanja, psihičkog i/ili fizičkog, zastrašivani, vrijeđani, tjerani preko rijeke bos, gladni, žedni. Humanitarne organizacije koje odlaze na teren zatekle su ovog rujna i početkom listopada ljude sa ranjenim nogama, sa vidnim fizičkim ozljedama, sa bolovima u leđima, sa frakturom noge, ponižene, iscrpljene. Uzimali su im mobitele, i obuću, bacali na hrpu i palili. Mobitel je veza sa svijetom, karta svijeta, glas roditelja, braće i sestara. Luksuz na kojim smo mi odavno oglušili, obnevidjeli. Zatekli su ljude opljačkane, mokre, bose, ljude koji su se žalili da su ih držali u nekom skučenom prostoru, pitali jesu li gladni, i kad bi odgovorili da jesu, nasmijali bi im se posprdno: hahhahah za vas nema hrane. Na takve se beneficije misli kad se kaže ilegalni migranti. Jer tim se pokrije svaki oblik nasilja. Kako je ono Stefan Zweig govorio: ako nemaš pasoš, nisi više čovjek. Više se prema tebi ne odnose kao prema čovjeku. A što je čovjek danas? List na vjetru, ždral u letu. Uzbek, Paštun, Tadžik. U vjetar bacam svoje pasoše"



## OUR MISSION OUTSIDE RECEPTION CAMPS

Our action begins where refugees are staying in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Besides temporary reception centers, their homes have also been abandoned and devastated structures. Sometimes, these are just transient, makeshift stops along the way, in a field or at the moment of violent pushbacks at the border. The Jesuit Refugee Service for Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, provides support to migrants and refugees who are outdoors without access to drinking water, food, sanitation facilities, medical care, and electricity. Our team of cultural mediators/translators and volunteers regularly visit the field areas in Bihać and Velika Kladuša, mapping vulnerable categories and distributing food and non-food items to those in improvised camps and abandoned houses. The distribution is carried out directly from our warehouse.

During this process, we didn't just provide them with essential humanitarian aid but also understanding and support. These encounters were an opportunity for exchanging experiences, sharing stories, and forming friendships. Together, we cooked, cleaned, and improved the locations where they stay. Some of their stories and experiences have been documented through advocacy texts and published on various web portals in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. In this way, they advocated for themselves, as well as for their compatriots and all refugees on the so-called Balkan route who face the same suffering. Their frequent experience of violence at the border during forced, illegal pushbacks is also recorded and documented to inform the wider public and media about the dangers they encounter.

During September and October 2023, we recorded 700 cases of violent pushbacks while going out to the field to meet with refugees who, after being forcibly returned from the Croatian border, were seeking transportation and accommodation in the camp. These testimonies indicate that victims experienced psychological and physical violence by the Croatian police, had their mobile phones, money, and footwear confiscated. Sometimes, we would encounter barefoot people in wet clothes because the police forced them to cross a river, or men who hid their tears in front of us. Sometimes, they had visible leg fractures, other times they had visible physical injuries, back pain, and a need for medical care. People who moved with difficulty due to exhaustion and leg pain. Minors encountered in the field also testified that they were victims of physical and psychological violence, as well as violent confiscation of their belongings, mobile phones, and money.

### Here are some of the testimonies:

*"After they caught us while crossing the border, they placed us in a cramped space and occasionally visited us with questions: Are you hungry? When we said yes, they would laugh and say: There's no food for you."*

*"They threatened us with guns. They took our footwear and mobile phones, threw them in a pile, and set them on fire. They put the money in their pockets. Then they forced us to walk barefoot on an unpaved road, pointed guns at us, and made us cross the river."*

### The excerpt from the text "What is a Human Being?" by Roberta Nikšić

"We are not aware of our own prejudices, nor do we fully understand the language used by the media. When they say, for example, "illegal migrants" or "pressure at the border," or when they say, "this doesn't exist anywhere else; as soon as they cross the border illegally, they have all the benefits," what does that actually mean? How does one respond to pressure? Of course, with repression. Which is the opposite of benefits?

In September and early October of this year alone, at least seven hundred people returned from the Croatian border sought accommodation and transportation to the Lipa camp, thirty kilometers away from Bihać, or to the Borići family camp in Bihać. All of them were victims of some form of abuse, psychological and/or physical, intimidated, insulted, forced to cross the river barefoot, hungry, and thirsty. Humanitarian organizations visiting the field in September and early October found people with wounded legs, visible physical injuries, back pain, leg fractures, humiliated, and exhausted. Their mobile phones and footwear were taken from them, thrown into a pile and set on fire. A mobile phone is a connection to the world, a map of the world, the voice of parents, brothers, and sisters. A luxury we have long taken for granted, grown blind to. They found people robbed, wet, barefoot, people who complained that they were kept in a cramped space, asked if they were hungry, and when they answered yes, they would mockingly laugh and say: hahahaha there's no food for you. These are the so-called benefits when we talk about "illegal migrants". Because this term covers all forms of violence. As Stefan Zweig once said: if you don't have a passport, you are no longer a human being. They no longer treat you as a human being. And what is a human being today? A leaf in the wind, a crane in flight. Uzbek, Pashtun, Tajik. I throw my passports into the wind.



## MATTEO RICCI UZOR U NAŠEM RADU

Prošlo je već pet godina od otvaranja ureda Isusovačke službe za izbjeglice u Bihaću. Tom prilikom prisjetili smo se puta koji smo prešli i zacrtali neke nove planove, neke nove vizije. Prigodna izložba fotografija ovjekovječila je u slici i riječi te godine služenja, praćenja i zagovaranja. Sve je to bio lijep podsjetnik na ono što je u srži naše misije. Nagnalo nas je na promišljanje što bi trebalo mijenjati, što bi se moglo unaprijediti a što je ono posebno što svakako treba njegovati i na tome ustrajavati. Naročito je lijepa slika našeg tima, svi ti dragi ljudi koji su prošli kroz naš ured, svi ljudi koji su još tu, i novi ljudi, svi bi oni mogli biti primjer za bosanskohercegovačko društvo. Odnosno, naš tim mogao bi biti slika i prilika bosanskohercegovačkog društva. Vizija kako bi ono moglo lijepo i stabilno izgledati kad bi se u njemu poštovalo ono što se poštuje u našem timu. Naši članovi su ljudi različitih religijskih opredjeljenja, različitih životnih nazora, različitih kulturoloških pozadina, različitih nacionalnosti. Svi mi funkcioniramo kao vrlo posebne jedinice i u drugima poštujemo i prihvaćamo sve ono što oni jesu. I zajedno radimo za dobrobit onih ranjivih, izbjeglica i migranata. Vjerujemo da time doprinosimo našem cjelokupnom društvu, promičući suživot, prijateljstvo, empatiju. Usporedo s ovom našom važnom godišnjicom, dogodila se još jedna sjajna stvar, a to je otvaranje Prihvatnog centra za maloljetnike bez pratnje i ranjivu/razdvojenu djecu. Taj prihvatni centar je već sam po sebi stjecište različitih kultura i religija. Kako zbog svojih korisnika, maloljetnika bez pratnje i ranjive/razdvojene djece koji potiču iz različitih kultura, tako i zbog svojih zaposlenika, koji također njeguju različita religijska uvjerenja. U takvoj raznolikoj sredini, koja je već sama po sebi poticajna i obogaćujuća, želimo njegovati prije svega takve stavove o bogatstvu u različitosti, te želimo potaknuti sigurno, kreativno i inspirativno okruženje, kako za naše korisnike tako i za zaposlenike. Vođeni tom idejom kreativnog suživota, nas i naših korisnika, inspirirani smo likom i djelom Mattea Riccija. Matteo Ricci je bio talijanski isusovac i misionar koji je živio u 16. i 17. stoljeću, poznat po svojoj inovativnoj metodi inkulturacije kršćanstva u kinesku kulturu.

Ricci je kao rijetko koji misionar prije njega poštovao i razumijevao lokalnu kulturu, postao je jedan od prvih zapadnjaka koji je naučio kineski jezik i proučavao kineske običaje. On je aktivno pristupio kineskoj kulturi s poštovanjem i razumijevanjem. Umjesto nametanja kršćanske vjere, Ricci je pristupio inkulturaciji, tj. prilagodbi kršćanstva kineskoj kulturi. Njegova metoda je uključivala pronalaženje sličnosti između kršćanskih koncepta i kineskih filozofsko-religijskih ideja kako bi lakše prenio kršćanske vrijednosti Kinezima. Ricci je bio fleksibilan i prilagodljiv u svom pristupu. Primjerice, koristio je termin „Majka milosrđa“ umjesto prikaza rassetog Isusa koji je Kinezima izgledao morbidno. Surađivao je s lokalnim vlastima. On i drugi isusovci stekli su ugled na carskom dvoru zbog svojih vještina iz astronomije, matematike i jezika. Ovo im je omogućilo pristup i utjecaj na lokalne vlasti. Iznad svega, Ricci je vodio dijalog s Kinezima i trudio se razumjeti njihovu kulturu. To je stvorilo osnovu za međukulturalni dijalog i razumijevanje. U kontekstu našeg Prihvatnog centra, Riccijeva metoda inkulturacije i pristup razumijevanju i poštovanju različitih kultura i vjerskih uvjerenja je uzor u radu s maloljetnicima i djecom bez pratnje koji dolaze iz različitih krajeva i različitih religijskih pozadina. Važno je stvoriti okolinu koja promiče razumijevanje, poštovanje i inkluziju, omogućujući djeci da zadrže svoj identitet i vjerska uvjerenja, dok istovremeno pružamo podršku i resurse za njihovu integraciju u novu zajednicu. Kao i Ricci želimo iz bogatih riznica svih naših tradicija izvući najbolje kako bi uistinu svi mi napredovali u ljudskosti.





## MATTEO RICCI

### MATTEO RICCI - AN INSPIRATION FOR OUR WORK

It has been five years since the opening of the Jesuit Refugee Service office in Bihać. On this occasion, we reminisced about the journey we have undertaken and set some new plans, new visions. A special photo exhibition captured in both images and words those years of service, accompaniment, and advocacy. It served as a beautiful reminder of the core of our mission. It prompted us to reflect on what needs to change, what can be improved, and what is the unique aspect that we should cherish and persevere in. Something particularly beautiful and profoundly powerful is the image of our team, all those dear individuals who have passed through our office, all the people who are still here, and the newcomers. All of them could be an example for Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. In other words, our team could represent a model of Bosnian-Herzegovinian society. It's a vision of how it could look beautiful and stable when it respects what is respected in our team. Our members come from different religious backgrounds, different life perspectives, different cultural backgrounds, and different nationalities. We all function as very distinct individuals, and we respect and accept in others everything that they are. Together, we work for the well-being of the vulnerable, refugees, and migrants. We believe that by doing so, we contribute to our entire society by promoting coexistence, friendship, and empathy. In parallel with this important anniversary, another wonderful development has taken place - the opening of the Reception Center for Unaccompanied Minors and Vulnerable/Separated Children. The Reception Center is already a melting pot of different cultures and religions. This is due to its beneficiaries, unaccompanied minors and vulnerable/separated children from various cultural backgrounds, as well as its employees, who also hold different religious beliefs. In such a diverse environment, which is inherently inspiring and enriching, we want to nurture primarily the attitudes of richness in diversity. We want to create a safe, creative, and inspirational environment, both for our beneficiaries and our staff. Guided by the idea of creative coexistence, we are inspired by the life and work of Matteo Ricci.

Matteo Ricci was an Italian Jesuit and missionary who lived in the 16th and 17th centuries, known for his innovative method of inculturation Christianity into Chinese culture. Ricci, unlike many missionaries before him, respected and understood the local culture exceptionally well. He became one of the first Westerners to learn the Chinese language and study Chinese customs. He actively approached Chinese culture with respect and understanding. Instead of imposing the Christian faith, Ricci employed inculturation, adapting Christianity to Chinese culture. His method involved finding similarities between Christian concepts and Chinese philosophical-religious ideas to make it easier to convey Christian values to the Chinese. Ricci was flexible and adaptable in his approach. For example, he used the term "Mother of Mercy" instead of the depiction of the crucified Jesus, which appeared morbid to the Chinese. He collaborated with local authorities. He and other Jesuits gained influence in the imperial court due to their skills in astronomy, mathematics, and language. Above all, Ricci engaged in dialogue with the Chinese and endeavored to understand their culture. This laid the foundation for intercultural dialogue and understanding. In the context of our Reception Center, Ricci's method of inculturation and his approach of understanding and respecting different cultures and religious beliefs serve as an example in working with unaccompanied minors and children from various regions and religious backgrounds. It is essential to create an environment that promotes understanding, respect, and inclusion, allowing children to maintain their identity and religious beliefs while providing support and resources for their integration into a new community. Like Ricci, we aim to draw the best from the rich treasures of all our traditions to genuinely advance in humanity.



## AKTIVNOSTI U CENTRU BRIGA ZA MENTALNO ZDRAVLJE

U našem Prihvatnom centru provodimo niz psihosocijalnih aktivnosti s ciljem pružanja brige za mentalno zdravlje i sretnije odrastanje naših korisnika. Jedna od tih aktivnosti u suradnji s partnerskom organizacijom CARE International je serija radionica kroz koje želimo potaknuti razumijevanje različitih kultura, izgraditi samopouzdanje i socijalne vještine među tinejdžerima, istovremeno potičući toleranciju i slavlje raznolikosti. Prva u nizu radionica bavila se temom snage jer nam je cilj bio osnažiti naše korisnike, posebno mlade koji su nedavno prošli kroz traumatična iskustva deportacije, te potaknuti prepoznavanje i njegovanje pozitivnih osobina. Ova radionica nije samo pružila alate za jačanje samopercipiranja, već je istovremeno bila izuzetno dirljiva, posebno zahvaljujući izvanrednoj otpornosti dvanaestogodišnjeg sudionika koji je izjavio: "Na svom sam putu vidio toliko toga, i sada mogu razumjeti svakoga tko pati." Osim što smo ojačali samopouzdanje, ove radionice imaju za cilj potaknuti emocionalnu otpornost, izgraditi zajednicu, poticati kulturnu integraciju, olakšati proces ozdravljenja od trauma te opremiti mlade životnim vještinama ključnim za osobni rast. Partnersko organizacijsko partnerstvo ne samo da je obogatilo ove radionice već je i pružilo mladima vrijedne alate za suočavanje s izazovima i napredak u njihovom novom okruženju.

1. Emocionalnu otpornost: Razgovarajući o svojim snagama i pozitivnim osobinama, radionica je pomogla ovim mladim osobama da razviju emocionalnu otpornost kako bi bolje nosili s izazovima koji ih čekaju.
2. Izgradnju zajednice: Poticala je osjećaj pripadnosti i zajedništva među sudionicima, stvarajući siguran prostor za dijeljenje iskustava i međusobnu podršku.
3. Kulturnu integraciju: Kroz ovu radionicu nastojali smo olakšati integraciju ovih mladih osoba u lokalnu kulturu, promovirajući razumijevanje i prihvaćanje između različitih zajednica.
4. Liječenje traume: Radionica je pružila priliku ovim mladima da započnu proces ozdravljenja naglašavajući njihove prirodne snage i sposobnost prevladavanja prošlih trauma.
5. Životne vještine: Opremila ih je životnim vještinama poput samosvijesti, komunikacije i rješavanja problema, koje su ključne za njihov osobni rast i budući uspjeh. Zaključno, ova radionica, održana u partnerstvu s CARE-om, nije samo imala za cilj poboljšati samopercipiranje i pozitivne osobine kod ovih mladih osoba, već je također težila pružiti im vrijedne alate za suočavanje s izazovima i napredovanje u njihovom novom okruženju. Ovo je značajan korak prema njihovom osnaživanju i oporavku od prošlih traumatičnih iskustava.



## ACTIVITIES AT THE RECEPTION CENTER MENTAL HEALTH CARE

In our Reception Center we conduct a series of psychosocial activities aimed at providing care for the mental health and happier upbringing of our beneficiaries. One of these activities is in collaboration with the partner organization CARE International. Through these workshops, we aim to promote understanding of different cultures and build self-confidence and social skills among teenagers, while fostering tolerance and celebrating diversity. The first workshop in the series focused on the theme of strengths. Our goal was to empower our beneficiaries, especially young individuals who have recently experienced traumatic deportation, and encourage the recognition and cultivation of positive qualities. This workshop not only provided tools for strengthening self-perception but was also particularly touching, thanks to the exceptional resilience of a twelve-year-old participant who stated, "I've seen so much on my journey, and now I can understand anyone who is suffering." In addition to boosting self-confidence, these workshops aim to foster emotional resilience, build a sense of community, promote cultural integration, facilitate the healing process from trauma, and equip young individuals with life skills crucial for personal growth. The partnership with CARE has not only enriched these workshops but has also provided valuable tools for our youth to face challenges and progress in their new environment.

1. Emotional resilience: By discussing their strengths and positive traits, the workshop helped these young individuals develop emotional resilience to better cope with the challenges ahead.
2. Community building: It encouraged a sense of belonging and camaraderie among participants, creating a safe space for sharing experiences and mutual support.
3. Cultural integration: Through this workshop, we aimed to facilitate the integration of these young individuals into the local culture, promoting understanding and acceptance among different communities.
4. Trauma healing: The workshop provided an opportunity for these young people to begin the healing process by emphasizing their natural strengths and ability to overcome past traumas.
5. Life skills: It equipped them with life skills such as self-awareness, communication, and problem-solving, which are crucial for their personal growth and future success. In conclusion, this workshop, held in partnership with CARE, not only aimed to improve self-perception and positive qualities in these young individuals but also aimed to provide them with valuable tools to face challenges and progress in their new environment. This is a significant step toward their empowerment and recovery from past traumatic experiences.



## DYNAMIC AND INTENSIVE MISSION BEING A VOLUNTEER WITH JRS BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Volunteers with JRS Bosnia and Herzegovina, spending an entire year with us, have the opportunity to get to know diverse cultures and civilizations through refugees and migrants. They encounter people arriving in Bosnia daily, hailing from countries such as Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Syria, Morocco, Cuba, Mongolia, Bali, Congo, Burundi, and Guinea-Bissau. Our volunteers regularly spend time in camps; in Bihać, there are two camps, one for families and the other for adult males. A similar situation exists in Sarajevo.

In these camps, they provide various services based on their preferences and talents. Everyone can find something suitable, as even the smallest gestures of kindness are highly appreciated and respected by migrants and refugees. From psychosocial workshops, IT courses, English or German language classes, sports activities, to mural painting and welcoming migrants upon their first arrival and registration. Being a volunteer means having a very concrete impact on the quality of life for migrants, ranging from helping with obtaining eyeglasses, accompanying them to dentists or hearing check-ups, to managing barber-shops in the camps in Sarajevo and Bihać.

In Sarajevo, in addition to activities in the camps, volunteers have the chance to participate in unique sports events and gatherings with asylum seekers and camp beneficiaries. Being part of the JRS team means experiencing all of this and being there for others. They will reward you with the most beautiful smiles you've ever seen, exceptional wisdom, patience, and perseverance rarely found elsewhere.

Being a volunteer with JRS Bosnia and Herzegovina is a dynamic and intensive mission. Yes, it also means that you are on the path to becoming a better person.



## VOLONTERI IZ LOKALNE ZAJEDNICE

JRS BIH potiče ljude iz lokalne zajednice da volontiraju. Prilika je to da se dva svijeta, svijet izbjeglica i svijet lokalaca povežu, zbliže, potiču jedni druge na razumijevanje i podršku. Volonterka iz lokalne zajednice, iz grada Bihaća, Amera Mujagić, podijelila je s nama svoje iskustvo volontiranja u JRS-u.

**Draga Amera, hvala ti što si dio našeg tima, i što si spremna podijeliti svoje iskustvo volontiranja u JRS-u. Što te potaknulo da volontiraš baš u JRS-u?**

U novembru prošle godine počela sam volontirati u JRS-u. Počela sam jer sam mislila da je to dobra prilika da više komuniciram na engleskom jeziku, da pričam engleski i na taj način ga poboljšam, zatim da se družim s ljudima i na zabavan način provodim svoje vrijeme. Prije JRS-a volontirala sam u Crvenom Križu grada Bihaća u razdoblju od tri mjeseca. Ova iskustva su mi važna i uvijek potičem i druge na takvo nešto. Da se druže, da komuniciraju. S vremenom sam shvatila da nije bit volontiranja samo poboljšavanje engleskog ili nekih drugih vještina, mada je i to bitno, nego je biti tu za druge, pomoći im, da nisu sami, nešto neprocjenjivo.

**I kako su prolazili tvoji volonterski dani, na koje si sve načine pomagala izbjeglicama?**

Puno vremena provela sam u Dnevnom Centru u Bihaću. Tu smo se družili, zajedno kuhali, slavili različite događaje, poput rođendana, i najljepše je što su to bili trenuci sreće i radosti za naše korisnike. Unatoč što su njihove životne priče jako teške, u Dnevnom Centru su to bar nakratko zaboravili i bilo im je lijepo. Mislim da im je to dalo bar malo snage da nastave dalje. Neke od najljepših uspomena su mi iz razdoblja volontiranja za JRS, iz kampa Lipa, gdje sam pomagala u frizerskom salonu. Sjećam se i kad smo išli na teren u Kladušu, na outreach, zajedno s nama je išla i snimateljska ekipa iz Španjolske. Tad je bilo baš uzbudljivo. Pomagala sam tad u podjeli higijenskih paketa paketa. Jako mi se svidjela i izložba fotografija povodom pet godina rada JRS-a. Nekako je sve rečeno tom izložbom. Ponosna sam što sam bila dio te priče..

**Koje bi bile osobine dobre volonterke ili volontera prema tvom mišljenju?**

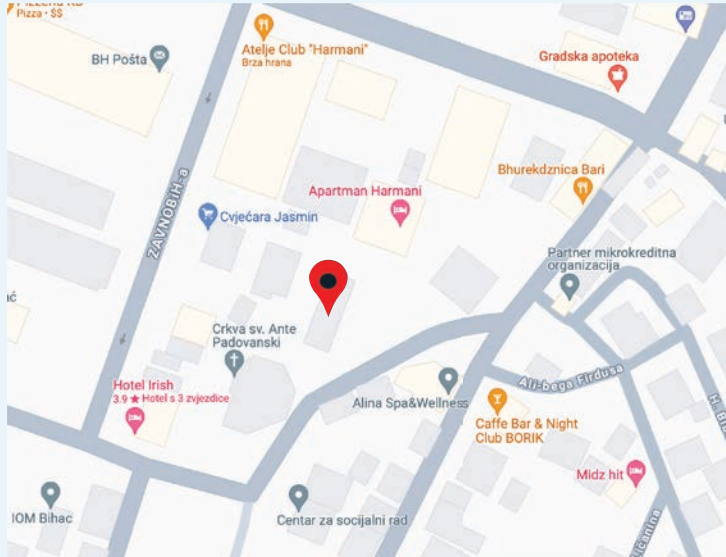
Kvalitete, osobine dobre volonterke ili dobrog volontera su lijepo ponašanje, važna je komunikacija. U "Isusovačkoj kući za izbjeglice", u JRS-u, svi su dobrodošli, sa ljudima se lijepo komunicira i družim se, slave se rođendani, naročito se lijepo slavi sa djecom. Drago mi je što sam vas sve upoznala, zahvalna sam svojoj koordinatorici Emini jer mi je pružila priliku da volontiram, da se družim s drugim ljudima i pomažem im. Sretna sam i ponosna na sebe, kad se sjetim, koliko sam ljudi dočekala, potrudila se da im bude uredno i čisto, u Dnevnom centru, kad smo zajedno pripremali hranu, kuhali, družili se, plesali.

**Rekla si i da druge potičeš na volontiranje. Kako to činiš?**

Jednostavno, pričam im šta sve radim, s kim se družim, podijelim neke svoje najljepše uspomene. Volim raditi, volim biti korisna, jednostavno sam sretnija. Ljudi to vide. I onda me pitaju: Amera, šta se to dešava sa tobom? Nekako si raspoložena. I onda ja krenem pričati... Da vi znate... Nekad ne znam stati... Toliko je toga lijepoga, a najljepše je vidjeti sretne ljude. Tu dolaze ljudi iz dalekih, stranih zemalja, svijet dolazi nama, ne smije se to propustiti.

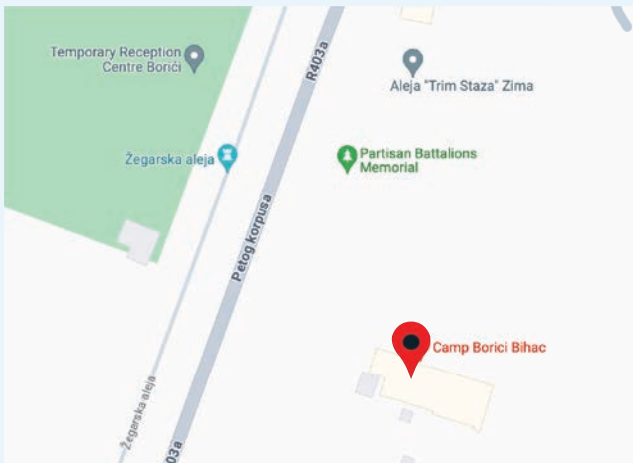


## JRS DAY CENTER



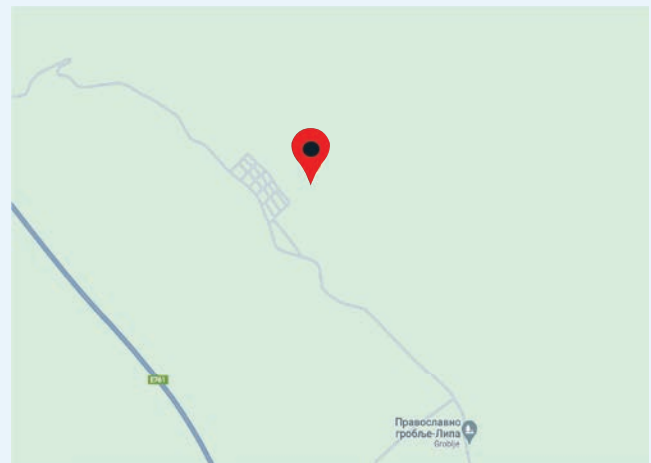
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## TRC Borići



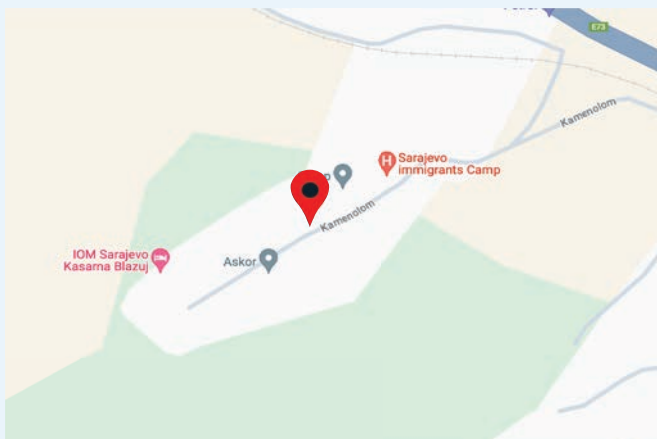
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## TRC Lipa



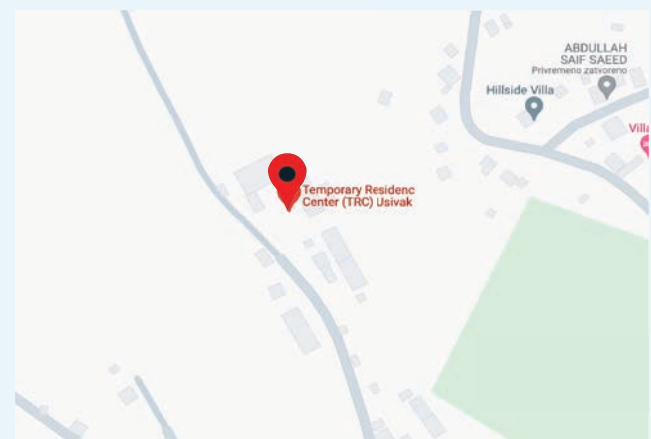
GPS 44.70177846463087, 16.076227776250587

## TRC Blažuj



GPS 43.842437490436176, 18.246483859782195

## TRC Ušivak



GPS 43.82353430605504, 18.217868702456176





**Kontaktirajte nas:**

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bih@jrs.net

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