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## Information bulletin Bulgaria: Earthquake

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

### Information Bulletin n° 1 GLIDE n° EQ-2012-000086-BGR 23 May 2012

**This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Bulgarian Red Cross, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.**

**Summary:** A strong earthquake with a magnitude of 5.6 hit the western part of Bulgaria on 22<sup>nd</sup> May early in the morning. The epicentre of the earthquake was registered near the town of Pernik also affecting the country's capital Sofia.

All responsible services from the Joint Rescue System in the Republic of Bulgaria were activated and deployed immediately to the affected area to provide support to the population. National media started broadcasting news about the event and its consequences.

The National Society is working in the field and is providing psychosocial support and distributing relief items to the affected population.

External assistance is not required at this stage.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>](#)

## The situation

A 5.6-magnitude earthquake shook Bulgaria, striking not far from the capital, Sofia at 3 am on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2012. The quake hit at a depth of 10 kilometres, 24 kilometres west of Sofia in the region of Pernik. The earthquake was felt in the whole territory of Bulgaria and in neighbouring countries. Several aftershocks with lower intensity between 4.2 and 3.5 were measured. This earthquake was stronger than the devastating earthquake of 1977 in Vrancea, Romania which heavily affected the neighbouring Bulgaria.

No casualties were reported, around 70 cases of injuries were reported to be caused by the panic and crowds when leaving homes, due to heart and blood pressure conditions more than 100 people, especially older persons were brought, to the state emergency hospital "Pirogov" in Sofia and to the medical facilities in the city of Pernik.



Radomir, Bulgaria after the earthquake. Photo: Bulgarian Red Cross



Damages were reported in the region of Pernik and in Sofia, mainly broken chimneys, cracks in walls and ceilings particularly in older brick buildings. Water supply system in the municipality of Radomir was cut off leaving more than 22,000 people in the municipality without potable water. Public buildings such as schools as well as blocks of flats both in Pernik and Sofia also suffered some damages. 140 people were evacuated from their houses.

Thousands of people spent the night of 22 May on the street, stadiums, squares and other safe areas.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

National Crisis Committee of the Bulgarian Red Cross has been activated and is in constant contact with the Government and the National Response Authorities, co-ordinating its activities accordingly.

Rapid assessment has been accomplished by the Bulgarian Red Cross in Pernik and the region on the same day following the earthquake, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012, while damage assessment in the affected areas is being organized by the authorities. Majors identified needs including potable water, since in some areas the water pipes are broken and unusable. Many people experienced fear during the first hours after the earthquake, especially vulnerable groups like families with many children and elderly are being affected by the psychological effects of the event, therefore are in need for psychological support.

A Disaster Response team of the Bulgarian RC (BRC) is being operational in the field, in Pernik Region and Rudartsi village, providing Psycho-Social Support and distributing water and relief items in coordination with the crisis management team of the local government, the regional authorities and the municipalities as well as with the national emergency response authorities. (Ministry of Interior, Fire Safety and Civil Protection Authority).

Based on its request, launched right after the earthquake, Bulgarian Red Cross immediately received in-kind support, 23,000 litres of bottled water from Coca Cola and 7,000 litres from Kom Company. These items were distributed on 22<sup>nd</sup> May to 22,000 people in Radomir region where the water supply system was damaged.



On 23<sup>rd</sup> May, in accordance with its mandate the Bulgarian Red Cross regional branch in Pernik organised provision of shelter to 20 evacuated people based on the request from the municipality of Pernik .

International assistance was offered to the Bulgarian Red Cross by neighbouring National Societies. Water Purification Teams from the Red Cross of Serbia and the Macedonian Red Cross, in coordination with the Europe Zone Office of the IFRC were set ready for deployment if needed.

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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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**Saving lives, changing minds.**



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
  2. Enable healthy and safe living.
  3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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