



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



General Fisheries Commission  
for the Mediterranean  
Commission générale des pêches  
pour la Méditerranée

## **GFCM SUBREGIONAL TECHNICAL UNIT FOR THE BLACK SEA (BSU)**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **GFCM**

The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) is a regional fisheries management organization (RFMO) established under the provisions of the UN-FAO Constitution. Its main objective is to ensure the conservation and the sustainable use, at the biological, social, economic and environmental level, of living marine resources as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and in the Black Sea (GFCM area of application).

The GFCM is currently composed of 22 Contracting Parties and European Union who contribute to the autonomous budget financing its functioning and 6 Cooperating non-Contracting Parties (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Jordan, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Saudi Arabia). It also formally cooperates with a number of non-Contracting Parties (e.g. the Russian Federation) and partner organizations (inter-governmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations) operating in the area and sharing common objectives.

The GFCM, in carrying-out its workplan and objectives, promotes a sub-regional approach to fisheries management, to build upon sub-regional specificities and provide sound technical advice that is discussed among those experts, administrations and partners directly involved and concerned. To this end, it established four sub-regional committees for each Mediterranean sub-region and a specific working group for the Black Sea. Sub-regional technical units were also established for each GFCM sub-region to provide ad-hoc teams for the implementation of the GFCM workplan at sub-regional level.



#### **GFCM Working Group on the Black Sea (WGBS)**

The Working Group on the Black Sea was created in 2010 as an ad hoc mechanism for scientific work and decision-making for Black Sea riparian States, as the issues at stake in the region necessitated a regionally influential, widely recognized institutional arrangement. WGBS objectives are to provide scientific advice to the GFCM on matters linked to fisheries management and conservation, including biological, social and economic aspects.

## BlackSea4Fish Project

As the tasks assigned to the WGBS work program each year continued to grow, including in terms of cooperation among riparian countries and with a view to promoting this cooperation further, a new initiative to support sustainable fisheries in the Black Sea through a scientific and technical project was endorsed in 2016. The BlackSea4Fish cooperative regional project is expected to contribute to further bridging gaps at the regional level and to endowing the WGBS with the necessary resources to ensure that the mid-term strategy for the sustainability of Mediterranean and Black Sea fisheries is efficiently implemented.

The project seeks to address the problems in the Black Sea implement activities and produce solutions under five main challenges and outputs, namely:

- 1) Scientific advice in support of management,
- 2) Sustainability of small-scale fisheries and the livelihoods for coastal communities,
- 3) Fight against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing,
- 4) Mitigation of unwanted interactions between fisheries and marine ecosystems and environment, and
- 5) Cooperation, outreach and dissemination of project results.

Together with the Coordinator, the BlackSea4Fish Project counts on a team based at the GFCM Sub-regional Technical Unit for the Black Sea (BSU) in Burgas, Bulgaria as well as the support of the GFCM Secretariat units based at GFCM headquarters in Rome, Italy.

### BlackSea4Fish Project Coordinator



Mr. Hüseyin ÖZBİLGİN, prior to joining FAO-GFCM, worked as Professor of Fishing Gear Technology at Ege and Mersin Universities in Turkey. He studied Fisheries and Aquaculture Engineering (BSc, Ege University, 1991), Marine and Fisheries Sciences (MSc, Aberdeen University, 1993) and Fishing Technology and Fish Behaviour (PhD, Aberdeen Marine Laboratory, 1998).

His main research interests are fish behaviour in relation to fishing operations and bycatch reduction. He has been involved in more than 30 research projects and 50 peer reviewed research articles in these subjects. He acted as rapporteur of ICES-FAO Working Group on Fishing Technology and Fish Behaviour (2007-2010), and has been editorial board member of Fisheries Research since 2006. He was the director of Mersin University, Maritime College (2010-2013), head of Fish Capture Department of Fisheries Faculty (2008-2021). He recently acted as scientific advisor to WWF-Turkey for SSF Co-management Project, and Turkish focal point to GFCM Discard Monitoring Programme.

## **THE SUBREGIONAL TECHNICAL UNIT**

In cooperation with the Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EAFA) of Bulgaria, FAO/GFCM established its Sub-regional Technical Unit for the Black Sea (GFCM-BSU) in Burgas in May 2018 and tasked it with the overall identification, planning, implementation and monitoring of GFCM programmes and activities in the Black Sea region, in line with the workplan adopted regularly by the WGBS and the GFCM. In 2021 the unit moved to a new modern office with all the necessary facilities within the premises of the Burgas International Congress Centre. In the same building there are two additional fully equipped conference halls at disposal of the technical unit for organization of events and meetings. There is a vivid pedestrian area, the Burgas sea garden, plenty of cafes and restaurants and excellent accommodation possibilities around the Burgas International Congress Centre.



The BSU covers the following countries: Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine.

The BSU plays an active role in promoting cooperation across Black Sea countries and in facilitating dialogue on regional issues and common transboundary challenges linked to fisheries and aquaculture in the Black Sea. It ensures a multi-disciplinary approach to field interventions. The BSU also assists riparian countries in effectively meeting their commitments vis-à-vis the GFCM, by supporting the organization of technical activities, trainings and any relevant action towards the achievement of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development.

Core functions of the GFCM Sub-regional Technical Unit for the Black Sea include:

- Promoting the attainment of GFCM priorities in the region
- Supporting the implementation of the WGBS workplan and the activities of the BlackSea4Fish Project
- Servicing riparian countries through the production of assessments and sectoral analysis
- Providing technical support and developing capacities of experts and institutions dedicated to sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development
- Building regional partnerships and alliances
- Providing up-to-date information, knowledge and data

### **BSU Team**

At the Black Sea Unit, Mr Hüseyin Ozbilgin acts as the BlackSea4Fish project coordinator, overseeing all BlackSea4Fish activities. Ms Yoana Georgieva provides expert support in technical matters linked to fisheries under the BlackSea4Fish Project. Mr Rusi Atanasov (Fishery and aquaculture junior expert) support workplan implementation. Mr Konstantin Petrov acts as GFCM subregional coordinator for the Black Sea, overseeing the functioning of the BSU and technical cooperation matters. Mr Mihail Vatsov (Fishery expert) supports compliance

and institutional matters in the Black Sea. Mr Svetozar Gradev (Office Assistant) provides administrative support to GFCM Secretariat, GFCM Sub-regional unit in Burgas and ensures smooth running of the office. He performs relevant duties in accordance with HR recruitment procedures and Travel Authorizations. The BSU also benefits from ad-hoc support from colleagues of the BSU host, the Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture, and it is expected to grow gradually.

**Location**

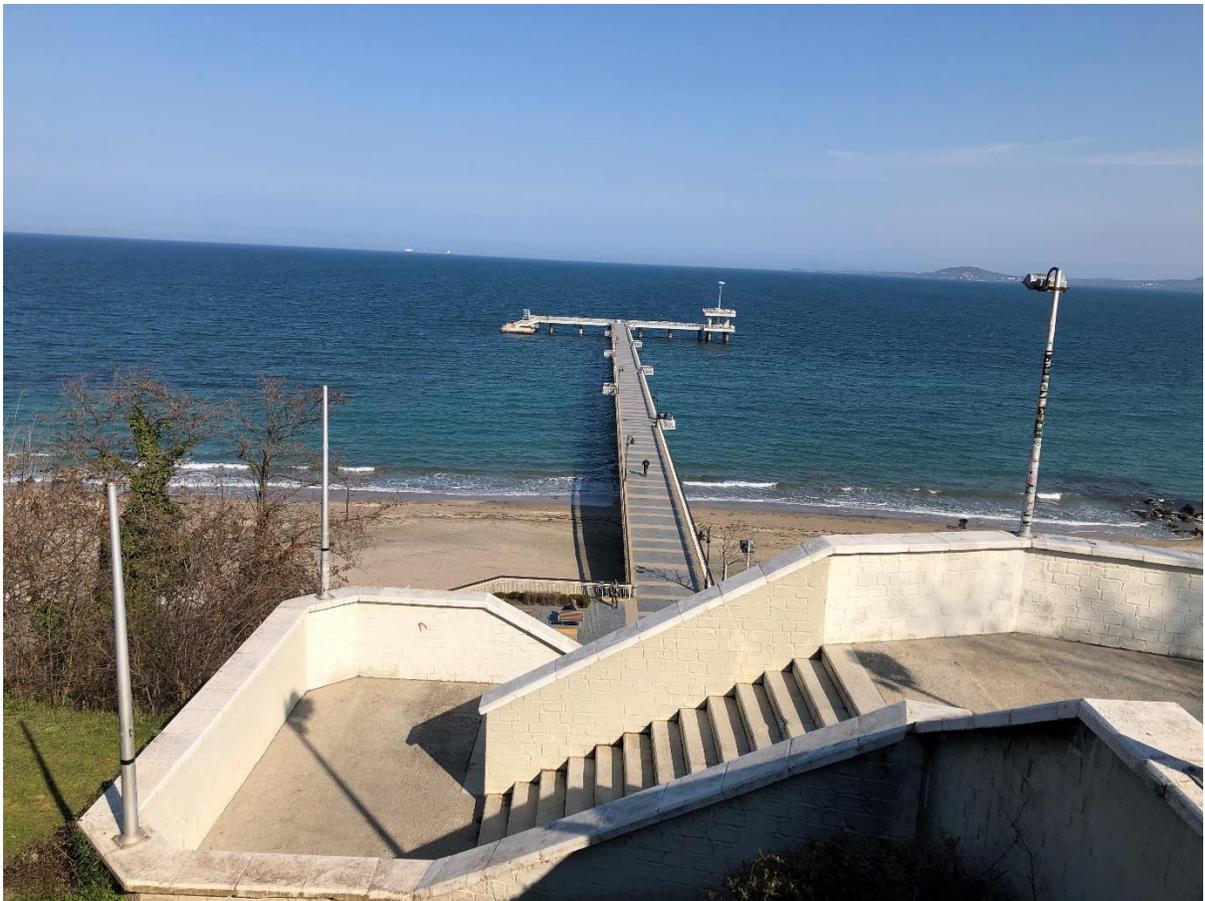
The BSU is situated in Burgas port zone with wide public access, just a five-minute walk from the building of Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture (EAFA)

The full address is:

**Burgas International Congress Center,  
Office № 4, Sea Station,  
8000 Burgas, Bulgaria**









### Use of premises

The BSU occupies a 135 sq.m. office with 6 working places and auxiliary space for team meetings and is situated on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor in the building of Burgas International Congress Center (seating around 12 participants and inclusive of projection facilities). The congress hall of the Burgas International Congress Center can be used for larger meetings.

The office working language is English.

Working hours: 9:00 h and 17:30 h

The building is closed on Saturday and Sunday. The Congress Center has 24-hour security, which can open or close the building anytime if necessary, upon preliminary request.

The EAFA building just a five-minute walk from the office (where other meeting room can be used by the BlackSea4Fish Project is located) can be accessed between 8:00 h and 18:00 h from Monday to Friday.

Official holidays:

| Date      | Holiday   | Notes           |
|-----------|---|-----------------|
| 1 January | New Year's Day  | Non-working day |
| 3 March   | Liberation Day  | Non-working day |
| 1 May     | International Workers' Day                                  | Non-working day |
| 6 May     | Saint George's Day  | Non-working day |
| 24 May    | Bulgarian Education and Culture and Slavonic Literature Day | Non-working day |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 6 September  | Unification Day                          | Non-working day   |
| 22 September   | Independence Day                         | Non-working day   |
| 1 November   | National Awakening Day                   | Non-attendance day for schools, otherwise a working day.                            |
| 24 December  | <u>Christmas Eve</u>                     | Non-working day   |
| 25 & 26 December                                     | <u>Christmas</u>                         | Bulgarians have two days of Christmas, both called Christmas Day. Non-working days  |
| <u>Moveable</u><br>(for 2019 – April 26 to April 29) | <u>Orthodox Good Friday &amp; Easter</u> | Good Friday, The Sunday and Monday of Easter are non-working days. Non-working days |

## **BURGAS, BULGARIA**

### **Living in Burgas**

Burgas is the second largest city on the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast and the fourth-largest in Bulgaria after Sofia, Plovdiv, and Varna, with a population of 195,966 inhabitants.

The LUKOIL Neftochim Burgas is the largest oil refinery in southeastern Europe and the largest industrial enterprise. The Port of Burgas is the largest port in Bulgaria, and Burgas Airport is the second most important in the country. Burgas is the center of the Bulgarian fishing and fish processing industry.

**Time zone:** EET (Eastern European Time) GMT/UTC + 02:00 hour (March-October)

GMT/UTC + 03:00 hour (October-March)

**Climate:** Burgas has a humid subtropical climate but with continental influences. Summertime lasts about five months from mid-May until late September. Average temperatures during high season are 24 °C. Winters are milder compared with the inland part of the country, with average temperatures of 4 °-5 °C and below 0 °C during the night.

**Currency:** Lev (pl. Leva) (1BGN = 1.95583 Euro fixed rate)

### **Useful emergency services and numbers:**

Emergency calls - 112

Ambulance – 150

Police – 166

Fire brigade – 160

**Country Code:** In order to make an outgoing international call to Bulgaria, the country code is +359.

**Power Supply:** 220V ±10% electrical supply. Supply frequency is 50Hz. Plug socket in use is the two-pinned Type F, also known as "Schuko"

### **Costs**

Bulgaria probably is the only country in Europe where with €1,000 you can have a better living standard than the average of the inhabitants of countries such as Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Sweden and Norway, which are among the richest countries in the world.

This money will be enough for you to buy quality food, to go outside with friends for a drink or to eat something, to pay the rent, to cover your monthly bills for electricity, water, internet, cable TV and mobile phone, to buy clothes, to pay for a gym card and to go to cinema regularly.

With this money in Bulgaria you will be even able to save some money every month without efforts.

**Table 1. Indicative prices of some basic costs**

| <b>Food</b>   | <b>BGN</b> | <b>EUR</b> |
|---|------------|------------|
| Basic lunchtime menu (including a drink) in the business district   | 14 lv      | €7.16      |
| Combo meal in fast food restaurant (Big Mac Meal or similar)  | 8 lv       | €4.28      |
| <b>Housing</b>  |            |            |
| Monthly rent for 85 m2 (900 Sqft) furnished accommodation in EXPENSIVE area                                   | 800 lv     | € 409      |
| Monthly rent for 85 m2 (900 Sqft) furnished accommodation in NORMAL area                                      | 600 lv     | € 307      |
| Utilities 1 month (heating, electricity, gas ...) for 2 people in 85m2 flat                                   | 151 lv     | € 77       |
| Monthly rent for a 45 m2 (480 Sqft) furnished studio in EXPENSIVE area  | 600 lv     | € 306      |
| Monthly rent for a 45 m2 (480 Sqft) furnished studio in NORMAL area   | 400 lv     | € 204      |
| Utilities 1 month (heating, electricity, gas ...) for 1 person in 45 m2 (480 Sqft) studio                     | 93 lv      | € 47       |
| Internet 20 Mbps (1 month)  | 40 lv      | € 20       |
| <b>Clothes</b>  |            |            |
| 1 pair of jeans (Levis 501 or similar)  | 114 lv     | € 58       |
| 1 summer dress in a High Street Store (Zara, H&M or similar retailers)  | 59 lv      | € 30       |
| 1 pair of sport shoes (Nike, Adidas, or equivalent brands)  | 146 lv     | € 74       |
| 1 pair of men's leather business shoes  | 108 lv     | € 55       |
| <b>Transportation</b>   |            |            |
| Volkswagen Golf 1.4 TSI 150 CV (or equivalent), with no extras, new   | 30,938 lv  | € 15,820   |
| 1 liter (1/4 gallon) of gas   | 2.31 lv    | €1.18      |
| Monthly ticket public transport   | 60 lv      | € 30       |
| Taxi trip on a business day, basic tariff, 8 km. (5 miles)  | 12 lv      | €6.00      |
| <b>Personal Care</b>  |            |            |
| Cold medicine for 6 days (Tylenol, Frenadol, Coldrex, or equivalent brands)                                   | 11 lv      | €5.52      |
| 1 box of antibiotics (12 doses)   | 25 lv      | € 13       |
| <b>Entertainment</b>  |            |            |
| Basic dinner out for two in neighborhood pub  | 40 lv      | € 20       |
| 2 tickets to the movies   | 20 lv      | € 10       |
| 2 tickets to the theater (best available seats)   | 33 lv      | € 17       |
| Dinner for two at an Italian restaurant in the expat area including appetisers, main course, wine and dessert | 80 lv      | € 40       |

**Housing**

Rents in Bulgaria are the lowest in the entire European Union. For prices between 250 and 500 euros you can easily find a large number of attractive offers.

But don't worry – you won't regret. For this price you can rent a good looking furnished apartment in a good neighborhood.

Of course, bills such as water, electricity, telephone and internet are not usually included in the price.

Typically, most people prefer to pay their rent month-to-month, but it is possible and probably it won't be a problem to negotiate another deal with the property agent, if you or your landlord want that.

Here below you may find some websites for finding an apartment/house to rent in Burgas:

<http://en.realestates.bg/>

[https://www.alo.bg/obiavi/imoti-naemi/apartamenti/?region\\_id=2](https://www.alo.bg/obiavi/imoti-naemi/apartamenti/?region_id=2)

[https://www.mirela.bg/en/index.php?p=offer\\_list&order\\_by=1&type=2&cities=18&acs=&acv=&price\\_from=&price\\_to=&area\\_from=&area\\_to=&floor\\_from=&floor\\_to=&bedrooms\\_from=&bedrooms\\_to=&bathrooms\\_from=&bathrooms\\_to=](https://www.mirela.bg/en/index.php?p=offer_list&order_by=1&type=2&cities=18&acs=&acv=&price_from=&price_to=&area_from=&area_to=&floor_from=&floor_to=&bedrooms_from=&bedrooms_to=&bathrooms_from=&bathrooms_to=)

## **Food**

Like rents, food prices in Bulgaria are among the lowest in Europe too. For example, in large supermarkets you can find a whole grilled chicken for the prices of around 3.50 to 5 €, freshly baked bread for about 0.75 to 1.50 €, bananas and oranges for about 1 – 1.50 € / kg, high quality potatoes for 0.50 to 0.60 € / kg.

Local Bulgarian tomatoes, which are considered to be the most tasteful and fragrant in the world, are around 1.60 to 2.20 € / kg during the summer season.

Fresh eggs are available for prices from about 0.13 to 0.15 € each. A bottle of mineral water (0,500 ml) is under 0.45 €, and about 1.25 € is a bottle of beer of 2.5 liters.

If you love white cheese, then prices range between 4.50 and 7.50 € per kilo, depending on whether you buy a cheaper or the most expensive brand.

A liter of milk in the big supermarkets is mostly between 0.90 and 1.20 €, and a pot of yogurt is about 0.50 to 0.70 €. Prices of the most popular brands of chocolate are usually below 1.50 € .

## **Entertainment**

Once you're in Burgas, you will definitely want to see as much as possible in the city – its sights, attractions, relaxation places, shops, restaurants, events. Well, we have good news for you – this will not be hard at all, because getting around in Burgas is not only easy but also pleasant. It is up to you how you do it – the public transport is one of the most modern ones in Bulgaria, taxis are affordable and if you like cycling – the city has a council rent-a-bike system.

Burgas is Bulgaria's second largest seaside city and fourth largest city in general- in a place this big, there always is something interesting to do.

The Seaside Park is not just a park by the seaside, it's the heart of the city, the muse and inspiration of generations of artists, poets, and musicians; it's been the stage of a thousand love stories. Here you will find the Summer Theatre which gathers thousands of visitors and locals throughout the summer season. Further on along the alleys, you can walk among the greeneries, past the sweet corn and ice cream stalls. If you start your walk from Bogoridi Street, the first thing you will be mesmerized by is the incredible view of the sea, the pier and the port, spreading out before you, standing on the terrace which all Burgas citizens call the "parapet". If the terrace could talk, it would tell you the stories of thousands of lovers' kisses, of dreamy looks staring into the sea, of children's laughter and even wedding events.

The Central Beach - with its golden sands of almost 2 km, the Central Beach in Burgas is a favorite place for citizens and visitors alike. Whether you want to rest or just spend your free time there, the beach is pleasant for swimming or tanning under the bright sun rays.

Burgas's ethnographic museum is among the town's most alluring destinations. The museum is located in the home of the merchant Dimitar Barkalov, which was built in the style of Bulgarian Renaissance

architecture. The city's historical museum is also an interesting place to visit, as it reveals the new and newest history of the town, ancient coins, and iconography from South Bulgarian and North Turkey.

Burgas's art gallery is located in the city's former synagogue. Back in the year 1947 the building was nationalized and turned into a gallery. Other interesting locations include the town's youth center, where the folklore ensemble "Strandzha" has its practices. Burgas's opera house is one of Bulgaria's few theatres, which are equipped for theatre, ballet, and opera.

St. Anastasia Island is located in the Burgas Bay in the Black Sea. It is a volcanic rock island, 12 meters high, at some places up to 17 meters high, and its area is almost 9 decares. Between 1959 and 1990 it was known as Bolshevik Island. It is surrounded by mystery and there are hundreds of legends and stories about it. A healing place, offering wonder-working herbs and potions from old recipes, medieval monastery cell, where you can stay overnight, restaurant with authentic Burgas meals from old recipes - all this make it the most romantic place in the Burgas Bay. You can get there on a boat, leaving from the Sea station Burgas.

The city offers series of cultural events, gathers performers of different genres on several separate stages, in order to provide three days of various quality entertainments for its visitors. For the lovers of old-timey music, Burgas also hosts an annual Jazz and Blues festival. Burgas also hosts several film festivals, days of literature and biker gatherings.

### **Transport (international and national)**

Burgas is an important business, commercial, transport and tourist city, as well as a starting point for visiting the Southern Black Sea resorts and the nearby holiday villages. Its favorable geographical location, the combination of air, sea, railway junction and road transportation, provides opportunities for intermodal traffic and allows for a significant number of tourism flights during the summer season, as well as regular airline routes throughout the year. The airport is situated on the Southern Black Sea coast. Buses are available from Burgas Airport. Bus-stop is located at the entrance of the airport area and you can use Line № 15. Initial and final bus stops in Burgas – Burgas bus station "South".

The BSU is situated near Burgas bus station "South" and railway station Burgas. Public transport in Burgas is a well-developed and convenient way to get around, which will bring you to any point of the city, quickly and easily. Electronic ticket system is implemented since November 2016. There are various travel packages and also tickets that can be purchased directly in the bus. More information about public transport in Buras can be found on the web site of "Burgasbus" Ltd. <http://burgasbus.info>. Platform for real time for urban transport in Burgas - <https://a2b.burgasbus.com/>.

There are regulated taxi ranks at all key places in Burgas – airport, stations, city centre and around the neighbourhoods. You can order a taxi at any time of day or night from any place in the city, by phone, while most of the time the call cost will be paid by the taxi company. The wait for a taxi to the place you need it at is usually not more than 5 minutes. If you decide to hail a taxi on the street, watch out for "fake taxis" – always make sure the car is marked with the mandatory sticker of Municipality Burgas.

The prices are usually between 0.59 and 0.79 leva/km and the regulation is up to 1.10 leva/km, whereas the price is different depending on the taxi company and whether it is a day or night tariff. The initial charge is no more than 1.00 leva and the waiting tariff is around 0.20 leva/min.

There are 10 taxi companies in Burgas, among which:

- Orion Taxi
- Eco Taxi
- Burgas Taxi
- Capital Taxi
- Stil Taxi

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### GFCM - BSU

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