



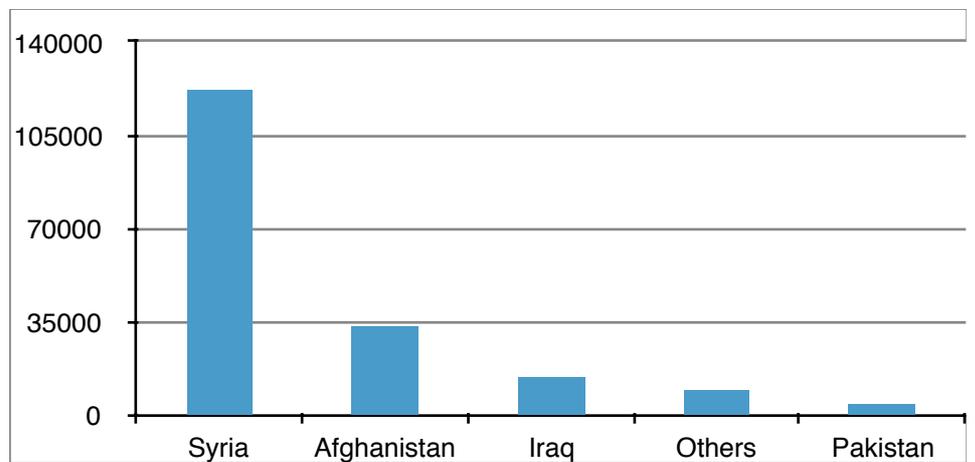
## FYR MACEDONIA

### INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

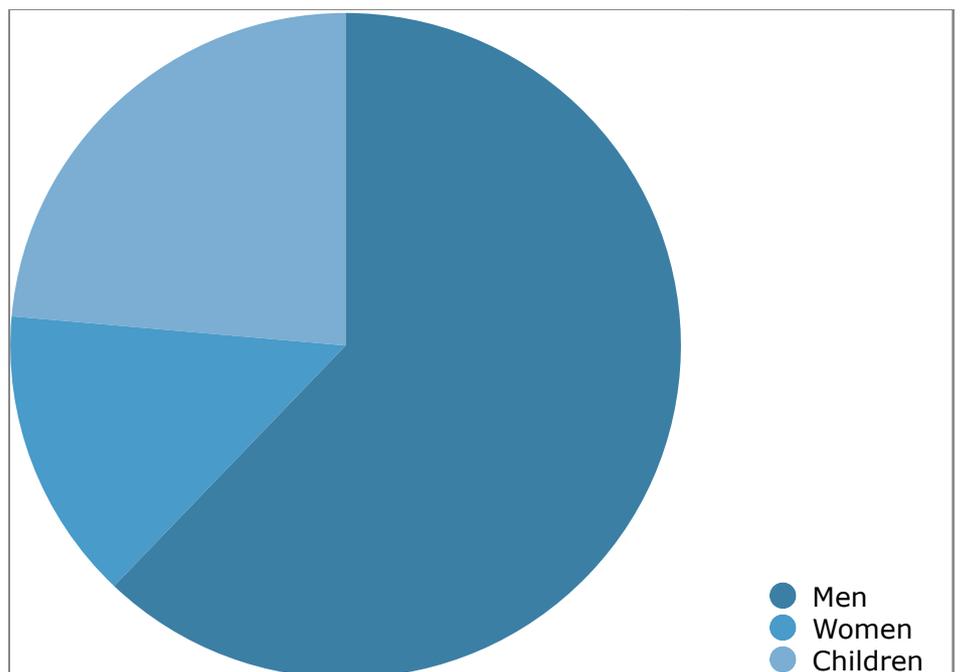
21 - 27 October 2015

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 54,212 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into fyR Macedonia during the reporting period 21 - 27 October with a daily average of 7,745. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 some **420,000** refugees and migrants have departed.



Intention to apply for asylum: **182,978** applications have been filed from 19 June to 27 October 2015 (source: Ministry of Interior).



### KEY FIGURES

**31,720**

Medical interventions provided

**3,240**

Medical assistance to children

**8,415**

Unaccompanied minors registered

**21,793**

Food packages & sandwiches distributed

**7,268**

Blankets distributed

### PRIORITIES

- Assist the Government and civil society in responding to the most urgent humanitarian and protection needs of the refugees
- Strengthen the asylum systems in the country in line with applicable international standards

# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

## Operational Context

54,212 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into FYR Macedonia during the reporting period 21 - 27 October with a daily average of 7,745. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 some 420,000 refugees and migrants have departed.

The Ministry of Interior's statistics of refugees and migrants declaring their intention to apply for asylum reached 182,778 including 43,183 children, of whom 8,415 are unaccompanied since 19 June until 27 October 2015. Of these 121,849 (67%) of the arrivals are Syrians, 33,387 (18%) Afghans, 14,254 (8%) Iraqis, 4,046 (2%) Pakistanis and the remainder represent other nationalities such as Palestinians, Iranians, Somalis, Congolese and Bangladeshi.

70 applications for asylum were registered out of which 51 were submitted by Syrians in the same period while from January to end of September 1,710 asylum applications were submitted.



*Red Cross providing medical assistance to an Afghan father and his baby.  
Photo UNHCR/A.Moller*

## Achievements

### Protection

#### Achievements and Impact

- In spite of a decision to only use trains to transport refugees from Gevgelija to Tabanovce, the recent high number of people arriving and irregular train departures has deemed it necessary to use buses and taxis again. This allows for a better flow of people, while also creating tension among taxi drivers who are waiting everyday by the bridge some 500 meters from Vinojug site. Twice fights have broken out between taxi drivers as observed by UNHCR. UNHCR has increased their presence at the taxi and bus departure area to monitor the situation and ensure a protection friendly environment for the refugees.
- The President of Macedonia visited Vinojug, where he was briefed by the State Secretary and UNHCR. He expressed his appreciation for the work and support of UNHCR and partners.
- Fire extinguisher have been placed at Vinojug and Tabanovce and an evacuation plan is developed to enhance security at the sites.
- All three rub halls inside Vinojug are now equipped with floor and benches.
- OSCE has commenced nightly monitoring at Vinojug site. The Macedonian Helsinki Committee has also started monitoring the situation.
- During the reporting period approximately 3,139 children and 1,112 women were provided with emotional and psychosocial assistance in the UNICEF Child Friendly Spaces operated by the NGO La Strada. La

Strada identified and assisted 511 vulnerable individuals. The activities are funded by UNICEF, UNHCR, GIZ and People in Need.

- During the reporting period approximately 10,000 persons were offered free legal advice at the Vinojug station by MYLA, who also assisted 8 asylum seekers at the Vizbegovo Reception Center with their asylum procedure. MYLA also ensured prioritization for 120 vulnerable individuals for their registration. The MYLA activities are funded by UNHCR.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The overcrowding of trains remain of serious concern to UNHCR. An official price list is still pending. Railway personnel has not yet started to use the new ticket office. On the positive side the railway staff allow minor groups of refugees to travel with each train if they do not have money to pay the ticket.
- The electricity in Vnojug is not sufficient to power the heaters. An assessment has been undertaken in order to obtain a transformer. Meanwhile UNHCR is looking at using generators as an interim measure.



## Health

#### Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period the Red Cross provided 31,720 medical interventions out of which 162 were pregnant women and 3,240 were children. Nine mobile teams of the Red Cross are working in shifts to provide medical assistance and first aid in Gevgelija and Tabanovce. This activity is funded by UNHCR and Red Cross.
- A medical team from the public health institutions, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, is present at Vinojug at all times. Some patients are transported to and treated at Gevgelija hospital.
- Four women used the mobile gynecological clinic managed by HERA at Vinojug.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Cleaning in and around the Vinojug reception centre is still unsatisfactory although there has been improvements. UNHCR and partners continuously work with the cleaners to improve the situation.



## Food Security and Nutrition

#### Achievements and Impact

- Legis, Nun, Kaliri, Agape, Dorcas, La Strada, Help the Refugee in Macedonia, UNHCR and Red Cross distributed 15,043 food packages and 6,750 sandwiches in Vinojug during the reporting period. Of other items that were distributed were 60 kg fruits and 845 packages of biscuits and 4,168 energy and cereal bars, 1,012 baby food, 596 children's drinks. Most were distributed at Vinojug and some at Tabanovce.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Hot soup from a mobile kitchen is envisaged to be operational in the coming days.
- In Tabanovce there is a need for a food distribution schedule and standard operations procedures.



## Water and Sanitation

#### Achievements and Impact

- Red Cross, Help the Refugees in Macedonia, La Strada and other NGOs distributed daily hygiene items to babies consisting of: baby wipes (686 packages), diapers (4,650), and to women; pads (520 pcs).

- The Red Cross distributed 296 hygienic parcels (for men, women and babies), 19 baby parcels and 11,522 bottles of water.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNICEF has started building an additional sanitation block for small children and a block for persons with disabilities.

#### Communication and Information

##### Achievements and Impact

- The UNHCR content media team from Geneva was on mission to shoot videos and photo materials of UNHCR's activities and the human stories behind the crisis. The first videos are available here: [UNHCR Youtube](#)
- UNICEF is distributing information on the benefits of breastfeeding in emergencies.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The installation of free wifi connection is still awaiting permission from the relevant authorities.

#### NFIs

##### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR, Red Cross, La Strada, Nun, Legis and Help the Refugees in Macedonia distributed 7,268 blankets, 1,027 raincoats, 82 sleeping bags, 1,030 pcs of baby clothing, 5,510 pcs of women's clothing, 580 pairs of socks and leggings, 100 pairs of shoes, 143 jackets, 1,445 winter hats, scarves and gloves. Most NFIs were distributed at Vinojug and some at Tabanovce.
- Dorcas, La Strada and Samaritans Purse distributed 1,389 backpacks.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Procurement of winter clothing by UNHCR, UNICEF and Red Cross is ongoing while local associations are currently providing second hand clothing to refugees. Especially rain coats and shoes are in high demand and often not available in relevant sizes.

## Working in partnership

##### Achievements and Impact

- The weekly coordination meeting in Gevgelija took place on Thursday 22 October.
- Partners working with the Ministries and municipalities to provide protection and assistance to refugees are: Help the Refugees in Macedonia, HERA, IOM, La Strada Open Gate, Legis, Kalliri, MYLA, Nun, Dorcas, Operation Mercy, Red Cross, SoS Children's Village, Caritas, Agape, People in need, International Relief-Samaritan's Purse, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Macedonia, Hilal, JRS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO.
- UNHCR attended the President of Macedonia's press briefing in the aftermath of the European Commission's meeting on the Western Balkans Migration Route.



A group of young Afghan men are resting in front one of the UNHCR rub halls at vinojug. Photo UNHCR/A.Moller