

## SERBIA

### INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

14-31 March 2016

#### KEY FIGURES

(MARCH 2016)

**1,512**

Transit registration papers issued

**699**

Registered intentions to seek asylum in Serbia

**39.4%**

of registered refugees and migrants were minors

**234**

Applications for asylum

**5**

Persons granted refugee status

**3**

Persons granted subsidiary protection

#### Highlights

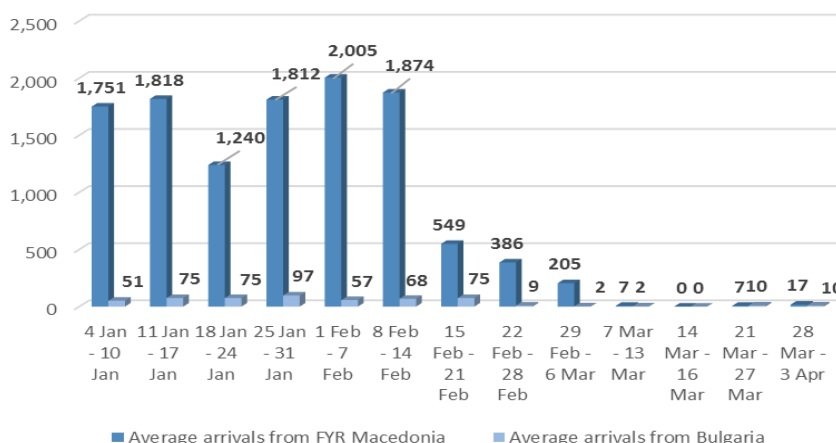
- Monthly MoI Asylum Statistics for March 2016 indicate that of the total number of 2,211 arrivals registered by the MoI, 699 expressed intention to seek asylum in Serbia while the other 1,512 were issued with a transit registration paper/new transit document. 43.2% of registered intention to seek asylum were made by men and 21.3% were made by women. 35.5% of the total intentions were registered as children. The majority of the asylum intent applications were made by Iraqi (49.5%), Afghans (17.2%) and Syrians (12.3%). During the month of March, five refugees were granted refugee status, three refugees were granted subsidiary protection, while six asylum applications (concerning 14 refugees) were rejected in first instance.



**Intentions to apply for asylum** (Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia)

**326** refugees and migrants registered their intention to seek asylum during the reporting period.

Daily average arrivals from FYR Macedonia & Bulgaria



#### PRIORITIES

- Ensure that urgent humanitarian and protection needs of refugees are being met.
- Assist the Government to strengthen the asylum system in line with applicable international standards

## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

On 14 March 2016, Miratovac RAP was closed due to lack of new arrivals. Humanitarian agencies moved their resources mainly to Preševo, as well as other locations.

As the Balkan route was practically closed for the refugee influx as of 8 March, smugglers' networks appeared reinvigorated and agencies reported of a constant trickle of a few dozens of refugees/migrants daily into the country and around the same number leaving to Hungary on a daily basis. Hungarian authorities also admitted 80 and then 60 asylum-seekers per day into territory and asylum procedures through "transit Zone" containers close to at Kelebija and Horgoš I border crossings.

Refugee numbers in the country, which had stood at around 2,000 at mid-March, shrank to just over 1,300 at the end of the month. The sharpest decrease in terms of occupancy rates was recorded in the transit facilities in the west of the country (Šid, Adaševci and Principovac RAPs), where occupancy rates decreased by 60%. Occupancy in the Reception Centre in Preševo, at the same time, remained largely stable, averaging 650.

UN agencies and partners continued to advocate for accommodating more refugees in reception facilities which are more in accordance with international standards (Bogovađa, Banja Koviljača and Krnjača Asylum Centres) and for granting temporary protection to all refugees/migrants stranded in the country, unless they decide to apply for asylum.

Aid agencies focused on moving away from winterization towards "summerization" of their NFI distribution, and initiated coordination mechanisms for cooked meals distribution in reception facilities and in Belgrade. Several agencies piloted some sort of educational activities for refugee children. Providers of medical assistance engaged in border monitoring so as to be able to assist the trickling arrivals in need of help (WAHA in the east, MSF in the north, etc.), especially the Hungarian border where groups of refugees were being found waiting to enter Hungary through transit zones, without WASH facilities or shelter from the elements.

Japanese company UNIQLO, a global partner of UNICEF and UNHCR, provided 6,500 clothing items for refugee children in Serbia.



Šid RAP - Children having breakfast, Photo ©UNHCR

## Achievements



### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR continued with **protection assessments** in Preševo RC. Protection concerns emerging in the course of the exercise regarded mainly persons in need of psychosocial support, with a number of cases requiring family tracing as well. Vulnerable categories included survivors of violence/torture, single women, unaccompanied children, and chronically ill persons. The majority of cases were likely in need of international protection, based on their profiles and experiences from the country of origin.
- UNHCR organised training for all staff members of agencies working in South Serbia. The training included sessions on Code of conduct, Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, Introduction to international protection and UNHCR's mandate and durable solutions.
- UNICEF and its partners adapted child friendly spaces' (CFS) activities in order to meet the needs of refugee and migrant children who became stranded in Serbia. This included structured recreational activities with a strengthened learning component, hygiene promotion, stress management and programs tailored for adolescents.
- UNICEF signed a partnership agreement with Save the Children in order to strengthen the capacity of CP actors on the psycho-social support (PSS) component. Under this agreement, Save the Children will provide training and coaching to CP partners on planning and delivering tailored and adapted PSS activities.
- The national SOPs on the protection of refugee and migrant children have been finalized and shared with the Ministry of Labour (MoL) for their endorsement. UNICEF has started discussions with MoL and Centres for Social Welfare on the provision of CP case management services to children and families at risk.
- UNICEF-supported CFSs, where children can access recreational and psychosocial services, continued to be operational in Preševo (in partnership with Danish Refugee Council) and in Adaševci and Šid (in partnership with World Vision and SOS Children's Villages). Over 2,000 children participated in the activities.
- UNICEF was coordinating with the authorities and child protection actors to make sure that children and family's needs were taken into consideration in all designated asylum centres (ACs).
- Philanthropy continued with distribution of cash cards (value €40) in Preševo. Cash cards were distributed to all refugee families placed in Preševo RC so they could meet their needs. 3,717 cash cards were distributed.
- Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre (NSHC) was present 12 hours a day, 7 days a week at Adaševci RAP. With the support from TDH, NSHC provided recreational outreach activities in Adaševci to 698 children and 125 parents; 97 refugees benefited from psychological first aid and support activities. With the support from IRC, NSHC provided 4,155 services to refugees in refugee aid points (RAPs) in Adaševci and Šid (help in access to medical care, provision of information, referrals).
- NRC-Praxis mainly focused their activities on Belgrade, providing protection by presence, as well as information to refugees at various locations 24/7. 1,448 refugees/asylum seekers (nearly half of them Afghans, but also large families from Iraq and Syria, as well as nationals of Pakistan, Somalia, Algeria, Morocco, Iran, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Eritrea, Bangladesh and Libya) were provided information. Due to fewer new arrivals at the Eastern border, NRC-Praxis discontinued its presence in Dimitrovgrad as of 28 March.
- With the halt of onward movement of refugees and establishment of daily routines in RAPs in most of the locations, DRC Protection Teams adapted their activities in the field. DRC Protection Teams maintained daily presence at the RC in Preševo, in Adaševci and in Šid RAPs. DRC Teams were conducting protection and displacement assessments, provided psychosocial support and assisted refugees and their most urgent needs. English language classes were organised for refugees and migrants at RC Preševo. DRC Protection Teams were present at Dimitrovgrad RAP as well.

- DRC/UNICEF teams provided constant assistance at the Child Friendly Space (887 assistances were provided to children and 336 to mothers) and Mother and Baby Corners (329 assistances provided to children and 342 to mothers) at the RC in Preševo. DRC/UNICEF Teams also implemented 98 thematic workshops on recycling, hygiene creative and recreational workshops, and language and drama activities.



Principovac RAP - Protection profiling in progress, Photo@UNHCR

- UNHCR's implementing partner HCIT maintained a 24/7 presence at the Šid train station, Šid RAP and Principovac and Adaševci RAPs, providing legal aid/protection and information (550 asylum-seekers) and referrals (243 referrals to medical staff). HCIT conducted detailed interviews with 40 asylum-seekers, and assisted several asylum-seekers in registering their intent to seek asylum with the police station in Šid. HCIT team assisted in cases of family reunification and cooperated with partner organisations, esp. Asylum Info Center and IOM, in case of assisted voluntary return (AVR). At least 25 PWSNs were assisted by transportation to the local health care centre and Sremska Mitrovica hospital.
- Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) maintained their Internet connection and WiFi access at the Preševo RC, providing a fast, free and reliable connection to migrants and aid organizations.
- In Preševo, Save the Children (SC) teams acted almost exclusively inside the Registration Centre (RC). SC continued working on identification of unaccompanied and separated children (UASCs) and other extremely vulnerable children. Around 50 UASCs were identified and involved in the psycho-social support activities organized inside the RC. SC team also conducted English lessons, as requested by the refugees, individual counselling and support, distribution of NFIs, including SIM cards. Refugees who were sleeping in improvised shelters (rub hall and MSF tent) were assisted with inflatable mats and sleeping bags. SC team in Preševo assisted 193 adults (mostly parents) and 394 children (266 boys and 128 girls, out of which 79 UASC) through PSS activities, information sharing, referrals and NFI distribution.
- A 16 y.o. unaccompanied minor was taken to maxi facial surgeon by the SC transport team due to the injuries sustained during the boys' trip. Another 169 children (of which 33 potential UASCs, including 2 girls) and 83 parents were reached and assisted with information, direct support and referrals through the Mobile Child Safety Team in Preševo.
- Through the static Child Friendly Space (CFS) in Miksalište in Belgrade, SC assisted 152 children (83 boys and 53 girls, 16 potential UASCs) and the Mother and Baby Corner (MBC) assisted 26 babies (15 boys and 11 girls).
- Through the Mobile Child Safety Unit in Adaševci, SC assisted 332 children (204 boys and 128 girls, 73 potential UASCs) with information and referrals.
- CFS in Adaševci RAP provided in total 981 services to children and 525 services to mothers/families. 245 hygiene packages were distributed through this CFS. MBC provided 334 services to children and 202 services to mothers and 260 long-life milks were distributed. CFS in Šid provided 1,074 services to children and 590 services to mothers/families and distributed 155 hygiene packages.
- SOS Children's Villages (SOS CV) mobile team in Adaševci provided in total 1,122 different services including translation and giving information, while the mobile team in Šid provided in total 724 services.
- SOS CV IT spot in RAP Adaševci (charger units and Wi-Fi internet) had 1,280 Wi-Fi connections during the reporting period. Charging stations provided electricity to around 1,000 users.
- SOS CV Wi Fi spot in Šid, at the Train Station point, provided support for 2,610 connections on Informative web page [www.refugeeinfo.eu](http://www.refugeeinfo.eu) with information in 4 languages regarding present position/map, registration process, legal rights, transportation, accommodation and shelter, medical aid, other services/support organized in the RAP and contacts along the transit route in Balkan countries (in cooperation with Mercy Corps).
- SOS CV IT spot at RC Preševo (in cooperation with Mercy Corps) provided 1,090 connections. Charging stations provided electricity to 800 users.



- SOS CV opened up an ICT corner in Preševo RC, which includes 4 computers with access to Internet. In the ICT corner, users can also charge their phones, since different chargers are available. Total number of Internet and computers services provided in IT Corner was 993.
- OM was monitoring two sleeping tents in Adaševci during night time watch hours.
- In RC Preševo, with the support of UNHCR, ADRA Serbia was providing 24/7 assistance in translation and psychological support.
- ADRA's Youth Protection Shelter in Belgrade, supported by Swiss Solidarity, was working 24/7 providing food, shelter and protection. In the second half of March, ADRA team had 1,424 interventions (shelter, food NFI, information, referrals) and assisted 723 refugees, usually without legal status, most of them families with small children.



Reception Center Preševo - "Circus for the children in camp" event,  
Photo©UNHCR

- ADRA Outreach Teams in Eastern Serbia (funded by Oxfam) distributed food and NFIs and provided basic psychosocial support in Negotin and Dimitrovgrad.
- Training for trainers "Community Resilience Model", in first psychological aid, trauma and resilience, was held 7-11 March in Belgrade. Training program was led by experts from the Loma Linda University of Southern California and Trauma Resource Institute California. The participants were field workers (professionals) from the Ministry of Interior, NGO Klikaktiv and ADRA staff from Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Germany. Training was organized by ADRA Serbia, supported by ADRA Germany and ADH Foundation.
- On 16 March, ADRA Serbia organized the debate "West of Eden" – stand about culture of

people and countries which refugees originate from, at the European Center for Culture and Debate in Belgrade. Zoran Ćirjaković and Momir Turudić, journalists and world travelers, talked about the culture of people of Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, Somalia, etc.

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Refugees whose transit registration papers expired after 72 hrs became vulnerable to smugglers, or to be fined or imprisoned, expelled or deported for illegal stay by authorities. In order to assist in stabilising the situation, UN agencies and partners requested the Government to grant them at least a temporary legal status such as temporary protection under the Asylum Law.
- Asylum-seekers accommodated in Adaševci RAP continued to ask for better access to services (post office/Western Union, exchange office, etc.).
- Should the asylum-seekers stay in the three sites in Šid for an extended period of time, psychosocial support to certain categories such as, female headed families, single parents with children, unaccompanied elderly, single women traveling alone, etc. should be intensified.
- Refugees/asylum seekers were in need of protection and provision of adequate information regarding their legal options more than ever. The risk of exploitation and abuse by smugglers had increased. Refugees continuously reported of high amounts of money, ranging from several hundred to several thousand EUR worth of charge, for being smuggled to Belgrade and onwards, and there were reported cases of families separated, including children separated from parents, on the way.
- The police continued to occasionally separate families by referring them to different ACs, sometimes even nuclear families, but more often large extended families from the same places in Syria, Iraq, etc.

## Education

### Achievements and Impact

- UNICEF initiated non-formal education activities through its partner DRC at Preševo RC and is planning to strengthen the learning component within the CFSs it supports in Preševo, Šid and Adaševci.
- Super Bus Project: In the framework of emergency assistance to refugees, SOS CV mobile educational team Super Bus was located in Niš, from where it travelled to various locations where refugees resided - Preševo, Adaševci and Šid. Super Bus organized educational, recreational, creative activities for children and young people. In addition, Super Bus was distributing toys for children and hygiene packages for children and women. Super Bus organized 24 activities for children in Preševo. Total number of services provided to children was 515 and to adults 61. 31 toys for children were distributed.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Access to education for longer-staying refugees-asylum seekers and migrant children needs to be secured.



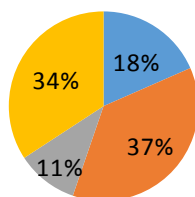
## Health

### Achievements and Impact

- DRC and UNHCR continued providing medical assistance to refugees in Preševo, through two medical teams, and in Belgrade, also through two medical teams, engaged through the local Primary Health Centres. The medicines for refugees were provided by DRC/UNHCR through the contracted local state pharmacy. DRC Medical Team continued to organise referral and follow up of identified and hospitalised EVIs in Serbia in order to provide additional support.
- Additional measures were taken by DRC to upgrade the level of personal and collective hygiene in the sleeping and sanitary facilities in the fully occupied Tobacco factory in Preševo. In close cooperation with the Public Health Centre in Vranje, Disinfection measures (DDD), epidemiological supervision and immunisation of refugees and supporting staff were undertaken.
- Due to the changed situation, UNICEF-supported MBCs stopped operating during the night. The work of nurses has moved on from IYCF counselling only to the support to hygiene promotion aimed at prevention of infectious diseases, documentation of vaccination status of children, early developmental stimulation (mainly in Preševo) and individualized support to families.
- UNFPA mobile clinics provided services in Šid and Preševo. Patients were either treated on site or referred to local health centres for follow up, when needed.
- WAHA International's field medical team in Dimitrovgrad treated 37 refugees in the reporting period (20 Iraqi nationals, 15 refugees from Afghanistan and 2 nationals of Pakistan). There were 25 recorded cases of upper and lower respiratory infections (pharyngitis, tonsillitis, nasopharyngitis etc.), 15 cases of bodily traumas and 2 cases of skin conditions.
- WAHA medical station in Šid treated 689 refugees, almost exclusively from SIA (Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan) countries. There were again around 700 recorded conditions in Šid, the most common afflictions were bodily traumas, headaches and muscle aches, with 163 cases. This was followed with 151 cases of upper and lower respiratory infections (pharyngitis, tonsillitis, nasopharyngitis etc.), with 88 suffering from symptoms corresponding to that of a common cold.

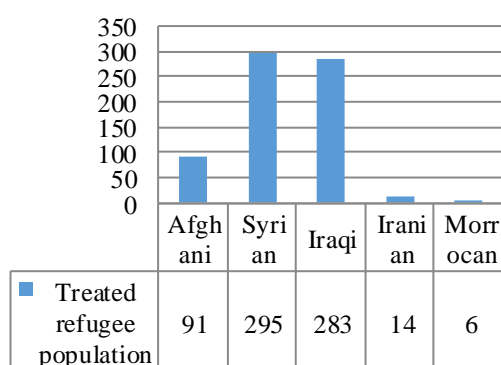
### Gender/age disaggregation of refugees treated in Dimitrovgrad

■ Adult women ■ Adult men  
■ Girls under 18 ■ Boys under 18



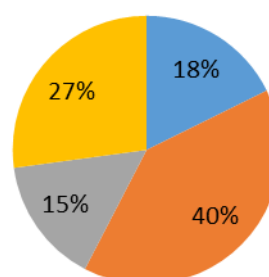
- According to MoH guidelines, all medical providers for refugees must carry lice treatments. Accordingly, 38 refugees were treated for Pediculosis (lice) by WAHA in Šid. 48 cases of gastrointestinal infections were recorded during the reporting period. Two pregnant women entered the clinic to receive treatment and seven patients were advised to immediately seek medical attention with specialists, such as ophthalmologists and gynaecologists.

### Refugee population treated in Šid



### Gender/age disaggregation

■ Adult women ■ Adult men  
■ Girls under 18 ■ Boys under 18



- UNFPA rolled out the initial Minimum Initial Service Package for Reproductive Health (MISP) training in Šid on 18 March 2016, focusing on Syndromic Treatment of Sexually Transmitted Infections, Clinical Management of Rape and Family Planning. Around 30 participants, representatives of the Health Centre (HC) Šid, INGOs and NGOs providing services in Šid attended the event.
- UNFPA CO with other relevant actors attended Health Coordination meeting organized by MoH, to discuss further steps in regards to the migration situation. Priorities were shared with MoH as agreed at the meeting.
- UNFPA mobile clinics were providing services in Šid and Preševo. Patients were either treated on site or referred to local health centers in Vranje and Šid for follow up, when needed. In Preševo, 64 patients received health assistance, and 8 pregnant women were examined in the mobile clinic in Šid. As reported by the HC Šid, mobile clinic was also used for transporting patients to the health center for treatments and 20-35 patients were transported on a daily basis.
- UNFPA leaflets on complications in pregnancy, antenatal and postnatal care, developed jointly with MoH, were distributed in cooperation with local health centers and other partners present in the field.
- As a partner of UNFPA, DRC engaged a team of gynaecologists and midwives from the Health Centre in Vranje to provide medical assistance to refugees in Preševo. The team provided assistance at the Reception Centre every Monday-Thursday for 4 hours per day.

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



## Food Security and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR and partners HCIT, Society for Peace Development and Ecology (SPDE), Asylum Info Center (BCHR), Sigma Plus and Amity distributed 12,630 litres of water, 2,900 food cans, 515 kgs of WFP high-energy biscuits (HEBs) and 526 kgs of biscuits in Preševo, Šid and Belgrade.
- HCIT stopped the distribution of humanitarian assistance in Šid area as of 30 March and moved some of its supplies to the north.
- NSHC and CARE provided 2,588 food packages to refugees in Adaševci, Šid, Principovac, and Belgrade.
- NRC-Praxis continued distributing dry food packages to refugees in Belgrade and in Dimitrovgrad. At the end of March, NRC-Praxis started distributing hot meals to refugees in Miksalište, through the Islamic Community of Serbia, following the signing of an agreement for preparation and distribution of hot meals. Hot meals will be provided every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Over 850 refugees were provided with dry food packages, while 98 refugees received hot meals on the first day of distributions in Miksalište.
- UNICEF-supported mother-and-baby corners (MBCs), provided nutrition and health prevention services to over 1,000 children 0-23m and their mothers in Adaševci and Šid in partnership with WV and SOS Children's Villages and in Preševo in partnership with DRC.
- UNICEF has initiated and supported Institute of Public Health to prepare new recommendations for IYCF food basket, bearing in mind the possibility of providing hot meals and fresh fruits and vegetables, and will discuss with the Red Cross on how to accommodate these recommendations once ready.
- OM was serving hot tea and coffee in the former Remar tent in Adaševci from 8h-10h and 14h-17h
- SOS Children's Villages, in cooperation with the CSO Life Aid distributed hot meals/soup in Preševo. 11,024 warm meals, water and chocolate milk were distributed.
- Caritas was providing hot meals in Preševo RC: breakfast for all the refugees present and 50% of the lunch, in cooperation with Life Aid organization. Caritas was also providing hot tea in its container in Preševo (12,700 tea cups were distributed).
- In cooperation with the Red Cross, Caritas continued to provide food parcels daily in Preševo and Belgrade (Krnjača AC, Miksalište and the Red Cross container in the park near the central railway and bus station). Caritas distributed 4,300 food parcels and additional 1,200 water bottles in Šid.
- In cooperation with Red Cross, Philanthropy continued to provide food parcels for one meal in Šid. Following an identified need, Philanthropy distributed warm meals to all refugees in Šid, Adaševci and Principovac. App. 800 refugees had a warm meal once a day and 4.000 meals were distributed.
- Since 8 March Philanthropy introduced distribution fruit and yogurt and warm meals for dinner in Presevo. Warm meals were for all refugees in the camp and in this reporting period 10.800 meals were distributed, 5.100 kg of fruit (apples, oranges and bananas) and app. 11.000 yogurts.



CRS/ Divac Foundation team started with distribution of warm meals at all three points in Šid area, Photo@Divac Foundation



- CRS/Divac Foundation team started with distribution of warm meals at all three points in **Šid area** – Principovac, Šid and Adaševci. Soup, main dish, salad and fruit were provided. Depending on the schedule created by Red Cross, CRS/Divac team was in charge of distribution of food packages for breakfast and dinner 9 times. 4,731 meals were served.
- Divac Foundation was assisting refugees in Belgrade through Miksalište. 930 halal warm meals and jackets, boots and other NFIs were distributed.
- CARE/NSHC distributed 1,824 food packages in Šid/Adaševci/Belgrade Miksalište/Subotica.
- CARE/Nexus distributed 2,811 food packages in Preševo.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Dietary diversity, warm meals, sufficient quantities of drinking water and better quality of some of the food provided remained a challenge, especially in the transit facilities in the west of Serbia and at the border to Hungary.



## Water and Sanitation

### Achievements and Impact

- The outdoor sanitary blocks constructed by DRC's local partner Philanthropy, supervised by DRC, were in full use in Preševo RC, ensuring proper standards of hygiene and sanitation. The outdoor area of the RC was kept clean thanks to the UNHCR-funded activities implemented by a cleaning agent. DRC continued the joint activities of counselling the refugees to make better care of provided facilities and equipment and become more involved in maintaining their personal and collective hygiene at a higher level.
- Caritas-CRS bathroom container with showers, located in Miksalište in Belgrade, was used to provide refugees a chance of taking a free shower during their travel. 402 refugees took a shower in this container.
- As a complementary activity to UNHCR/DRC rehabilitation activities realised with remaining 2015 funds in Miratovac RAP, currently used for accommodating Mol staff, DRC will implement DFID/Start N. funding and provide two water supply pumps and supporting equipment.
- OM was cleaning the camp site in Adaševci 24/7 and also assisting in managing shower watch in Adaševci from 9:30-13h

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Refugees waiting to be admitted into Hungary through the "transit zones" lack any access to sanitary facilities.
- In several rooms at Adaševci motel/RAP toilets and showers were out of order. In addition, shower containers, placed outside the motel, could be utilised only from 19.00h until 22.00h.
- DRC team and UNHCR site planner visited Principovac RAP on 18 March and decided that there was an urgent need for a well to be drilled on the site to ensure regular water provision.



## Shelter and NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

- In view of the need for additional accommodation and as envisaged by the UNHCR 2016 plan, DRC is ready to launch the tendering procedure for Phase III rehabilitation of the Tobacco Factory in Preševo, which would involve the refurbishment of a multipurpose space equipped with the sanitary block. Phase III would provide accommodation and reception capacities for additional 650 refugees.

- Through DFID/Strat Network funds, DRC technical team launched the rehabilitation works of existing facilities for establishing the Humanitarian Aid Coordination and Management premises at Preševo RC. After the project design was agreed upon with the Government WG and efficient tendering, DRC launched the works at the RC compound.
- Rehabilitation works on premises intended for social activities and a prefabricated facility at Šid RAP, funded with DANIDA and DFID/Start Network funds, were completed by DRC, equipped with furniture, and opened for use by the refugees.
- DRC completed the adaptation of 3 accommodation pavilions and 3 apartment units, funded by EUD and DFID/Start Network, at Krnjača AC. Outdoor works and furniture installation are in progress.
- UNHCR and partners HCIT, SPDE, Asylum Info Center (BCHR), Sigma Plus and Amity distributed 667 blankets, 1,561 pairs of socks, 393 pairs of footwear, 398 winter jackets, 266 raincoats, 2 sleeping bags, 412 hygiene gels, 145 plastic bags, 573 hygiene packs and 40 plastic sheets/tarpaulins in Preševo, Belgrade and Šid area.
- Save the Children's partner Group 484 continued the distribution of NFIs within the RC Preševo. 192 children (82 boys and 110 girls) and 124 adults (106 men and 18 women) were assisted with winter clothes and boots. In addition, 106 baby blankets were distributed (43 boys and 63 girls).
- NSHC and TDH provided 2,838 winter and hygienic items distributed to 826 beneficiaries, mainly children and mothers, as well as 500 sets of bed sheets to asylum centres (ACs) in Sjenica and Tutin. NSHC and CARE provided 404 hygienic packages to refugees in Adaševci, Grey House in Šid and in Belgrade.
- NRC-Praxis moved their stock of NFIs (jackets, shoes, sweatshirts, tracksuit bottoms, leggings, socks) from Dimitrovgrad to Belgrade where it was being distributed to refugees in Miksalište and in the field elsewhere. A total of 1,115 refugees/asylum seekers were provided with NFIs.
- NRC-Praxis donated gas heaters to DRC in Preševo.
- UNICEF, through its partners DRC, World Vision and HCIT, reached over 900 children with winter items (raincoats, sets of winter hat, scarf and gloves, winter jackets, thermal underwear sets, pairs of winter boots, pairs of winter socks, overall outerwear for babies and thermal cover baby sets).
- SOS CV mobile team in Preševo organized outreach activities and distributed in total 1,034 NFIs, including hygiene packages for children and women.
- OM was running the former Remar tent in Adaševci as a social space from 8h-20h
- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide hygiene packs for women and children in Preševo, Belgrade and Adaševci/Šid. Caritas distributed 2,800 hygiene parcels for women, 95 hygiene parcels for children, 450 rain jackets for adults, 420 rain jackets for children, 349 shoes for adults, 252 shoes for children, 150 hats for adults, 70 hats for children, 5,736 pairs of socks for adults and 120 pairs of socks for children.
- Having in mind the changes in refugee crisis and static situation, CRS/Divac Foundation started with distribution of hygiene packages for men and women and spring clothes for those who are staying in Šid area. In total, 1,559 hygiene packages and 1,892 clothing items were distributed.
- Divac Foundation was present in Dimitrovgrad RAP where they were monitoring the situation and provided assistance as needed to refugees who managed to enter Serbia. 20 jackets and 15 pairs of boots were distributed.
- ADRA team distributed 150 scarfs, 30 knapsacks, 50 pieces of underwear, 100 hygiene kits for men and 100 for women in RC Preševo.
- CARE/NSHC distributed 646 NFIs (packages) in Šid/Adaševci/Belgrade/Miksalište. CARE/NSHC distributed 388 NFIs (hygiene items/baby food jars, pairs of gloves, pairs of socks, hats) in Belgrade/Miksalište. CARE/Nexus distributed 1,443 NFIs (items) in Preševo.



Šid – HCIT staff distributing aid at the train station,  
Photo@UNHCR

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Asylum-seekers awaiting to be admitted into Hungary at the transit zones, sometimes overnight, lacked any shelter from the elements.
- There was a demand for larger quantities of children and women's clothing, men's trousers, underwear, bigger size boots/shoes and pyjamas at transit facilities in the west, underequipped for longer stay.
- There was an increase in the numbers of refugees/migrants sleeping out in the open in Belgrade.
- There was no accommodation in Belgrade for refugees who were referred to ACs outside of Belgrade and who finished registration late in the afternoon/at night when there were no bus departures to the assigned ACs.



*Adaševci RAP - Refugees playing chess in the INTERSOS room with Wi-Fi and charging facilities, Photo©UNHCR*



## Support to local communities

### Achievements and Impact

- In the scope of the Project "Enhancement of Migration Response Capacities in Serbia (EMRCS)", funded by the Danish Embassy to the Republic of Serbia, the first Local Action Plan addressing the needs of asylum seekers and migrants transiting Serbia was implemented, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders on both central and local level. Three public debates on the Draft Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection were held and attended by the EMRCS team representative.
- Five workshops were organised by the DRC, with the funding from DFID/Start Network, between 21-31 March, with trainers from the SCRM, the MoI and DRC. Workshops in Belgrade were organised with the aim to improve the capacities of local Migration Councils in order to ensure adequate response to the migrants' needs and other challenges caused by current refugee/migrant influx.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR

## Working in partnership

- The internal coordination mechanism of the UN system in Serbia is the **UN Refugee Theme Group (RTG)**, which meets every Friday under UNHCR chairmanship. The RTG coordinates the 4 sectorial working groups (WGs): a) Refugee Protection WG (Co-chaired by the Ministry of Labour, Employment Veteran and Social Policy (hereinafter: MoL) & UNHCR), b) the WG on Shelter/NFI/WASH (Co-chaired by Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM), MoL & UNHCR), c) WG on Health/Food/Nutrition (Co-chaired by the Ministry of Health & WHO) and d) WG on Local Community Support (Co-chaired by the Ministry of Local Self-Government & UNDP). The RTG met on 18 March.
- The **Refugee Protection Working Group (RPWG)**, Co-chaired by UNHCR and the MoL, met on 17 March in Belgrade. It is the key coordination mechanism for agencies/NGOs operational in the country, as well as a source of information for donors/diplomatic missions who attend its meetings as observers. RPWG has over 150 members and meets on a fortnightly basis. Under UNHCR lead, RPWG has given rise to three sub- working groups (SWGs) on: a) Information for Refugees, b) Child Protection and c) Non-Food Items (NFIs).
- Field coordination meetings take place every week in Preševo (co-chaired by MoL & UNHCR) and Šid (co-chaired by SCRM & UNHCR).
- The monthly **Partners' Briefing**, where UNHCR/UNRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MoL/Chair of Government WG on Mixed Migration update the diplomatic corps/donors and NGOs on the refugee/migrant situation and the response of UN agencies and their partners in the previous period, took place on 30 March in Belgrade.

### Contacts:

Ms. Indira Beganović, Reporting Officer, E-mail: [beganovi@unhcr.org](mailto:beganovi@unhcr.org), Tel: +381 (0) 63 431 886

Ms. Vera Dragović-O'Donnell, Information Management Associate, E-mail: [dragovic@unhcr.org](mailto:dragovic@unhcr.org), Tel: +381 (0) 63 343 521

### Links:

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