

October 2016

HIGHLIGHTS

KEY FIGURES

332,492

Refugees and migrants arriving by sea to Europe in 2016 (as of 31 October).

3,930

Refugees and migrants estimated to have died / gone missing at sea in 2016 (as of 31 October). Compared to 3,771 in 2015.

169,459

Estimated sea arrivals in Greece in 2016 (as of 31 October) compared to 385,069 during the same period in 2015

159,306

Estimated sea arrivals in Italy in 2016 (as of 31 October) compared to 132,071 during the same period in 2015

22,772

Estimated unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) arrived by sea to Italy in 2016 compared to 12,360 total UASC in 2015.

USD 669.9M

Total 2016 requirements for UNHCR's activities in the context of the Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan for Europe.

USD 439.8M

Funding received for UNHCR's activities thus far in Europe in 2016.

PRIORITIES

- Boost reception capacity, winterize shelter facilities and provide emergency assistance in receiving countries through support for States, civil society and local communities.
- Strengthen protection systems and support access to asylum for those in need of international protection.
- Ensure access to durable solutions for persons found to be in need of international protection.

- As of 31 October 2016, some 332,492 people had crossed the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. During the reporting period, the trend in sea arrivals through the Eastern Mediterranean was similar to those in September, with 3,080 people arriving in Greece. As of 31 October, 159,315 persons had arrived by sea in Italy in 2016 the highest number ever recorded in a single month.
- UNHCR continued to support authorities across Europe in winterization efforts. In Greece, during October, UNHCR and its partners distributed over 109,513 core relief items to refugees and migrants residing in sites on the Greek islands and mainland. In addition, 234 prefab units were installed in various sites, including Katsikas, Nea Kavala, Filippiada and Alexandria.
- In Serbia UNHCR and partners distributed some 1,800 UNHCR blankets, over 2,300 winter jackets, 1,300 raincoats and footwear as well as clothing donated by Zara to refugees. In the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia winter items were also distributed and two prefab housing units were made available at the Center in Tabanovce.
- On the Greek mainland, around 700 refugee children hosted at accommodation sites started school on 10 October with 45 afternoon reception classes tailored to refugee children at 16 primary and secondary public schools. UNHCR worked closely with the Ministry of Education for the (establishment of afternoon classes and supported the provision of interpretation services in different locations.



With thanks to funding by the EC-Humanitarian Aid, UNHCR distributed 130 school bags with stationary, bringing smiles to the children's faces and hope to their parents.

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OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Trends of sea arrivals

In total 27,384 people arrived in Italy by sea as of 31 October compared to 8,916 in October 2015 and 15,279 in October 2014. The main nationalities of persons arriving by sea to Italy are Nigeria (21%), Eritrea (12%), The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea (7% each) and Sudan (6%). Total sea arrivals in the first ten months of 2016 reached 159,427, compared to 140,987 arrivals in the same period last year. This represents a 13% increase from January-October 2015 and UNHCR is monitoring factors that could impact on such a recent increase. Sea arrivals mainly originated from sub-Saharan African countries (Nigeria: 21%; Eritrea: 12%; Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire: 7% each; Gambia and Sudan: 5% each) and predominantly departed from Libya. Since the beginning of the year, 22,772 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) were disembarked in Italy, a 110% increase compared to UASC arrivals as of the end of October 2015.

The trend of sea arrivals in the Eastern Mediterranean remained generally consistent in October with 2,970 arrivals compared to 3,080 in September but a drastic decrease in comparison to October 2015 when 211,663 arrivals were recorded. Overall, arrivals are still much lower than during the same period in 2015 as well as the first months of 2016. By 31 October, 169,794 people had crossed the sea to Greece in 2016, compared to 596,732 in 2015. Since April, only 18,342 refugees and migrants have crossed the sea to Greece, in comparison to 584,291 in the same period in 2015.

Numerous tragedies at sea occurred in the Mediterranean in October, with over 430 persons reported dead or missing. The death toll hit a [record high](#), with nearly 4,000 [lives lost thus far in 2016](#).

Relocation

According to the [European Commission's seventh report on relocation and resettlement](#) published on 09 November, the total number of formal pledges by Member States for relocation amounts to 16,259 (4,954 to Italy and 11,305 to Greece). As of 31 October, 5,112 asylum-seekers (only 7.6% of the targeted 66,400) were relocated from Greece to other EU countries. In the same period 230 persons were transferred from Italy to Croatia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and Romania, bringing the total of relocations to 1,489 (3.8% of the 39,600 target).

Situation Overview in Greece

There are widespread tensions amongst asylum-seekers across the country for a variety of reasons including delays in the registration and processing of asylum claims as well as severe overcrowding at open accommodation sites, which has also heightened security concerns. On the Aegean Islands in particular, a steady pace of continuous arrivals during the month, combined with the slow pace of transfers and delays in processing of asylum cases, are putting severe strains on the existing sites. Moria RIC on Lesbos, Vathy RIC on Samos¹ and Skaramagas site on the mainland are the three most overcrowded sites on Greece.

On the Aegean Islands a number of concerning incidents took place during the reporting period. On 08 October, on Chios a group of people at the open accommodation site in Souda started a protest in which some containers belonging to UNHCR's partners in the administration area were damaged. On the island of Lesbos, a fire broke out during protests at Moria Reception and Identification Centre (RIC) on 20 October destroying nine containers used by EASO and the Regional Asylum Office. The transfer of 113 asylum-seekers who were scheduled to depart to the mainland was delayed because the necessary documents were inside one of the containers which were destroyed during the incident. At the Greece-Turkey land border in the Evros region, a group of 214 refugees mostly from Syria and Iraq were apprehended on 04 October. They were transferred and detained at the pre-removal centre of Fylakio, where UNHCR coordinated the provision of assistance with other actors in the RIC. UNHCR also provided information sessions to all individuals regarding

¹ [Samos recorded the highest number of arrivals \(1,351 people or 45% of total arrivals\) during the month which also reflects more than a threefold increase compared to arrivals in September.](#)

their rights and the following administrative procedures, enhancing the coordination with Police and Reception and Identification Service (RIS).

On the Greek mainland, the security situation at the main sites in northern and central Greece remain of concern as protests and unrest continue throughout various sites. In Softex (Northern Greece), on 24 October, some residents expressed their frustrations by throwing stones at UNHCR containers. Although the situation subsided following police intervention, this incident is one of many highlighting an increase in protests requesting the need for improvement in the cash program, living conditions, timely information provision, food and other basic services at all sites. UNHCR has previously raised concerns over security in reception centres on the mainland and RICs on the Aegean Islands.

At the Inter-Agency Meeting organized by UNHCR on 31 October, the Director of Greece's Asylum Service, Maria Stavropoulou, noted that up to 35,000 asylum applications have been fully lodged as of the end of October, of which 20,000 on the mainland. As of 23 October, police have recorded 18,228 intentions to apply for asylum on the islands. Among the applications accepted on the islands, 7,321 have been declared admissible and 1,022 inadmissible (Syrian nationals) while 2,594 cases have been referred to the regular asylum procedure. Among them 1,360 cases were referred due to specific needs or vulnerabilities, 911 cases for Dublin family reunification and 323 cases for individual circumstances.

Presently, UNHCR's engagement in Greece encompasses support through activities involving protection, information management, health, education, food security and nutrition, shelter and core relief logistics, site management, and community empowerment. Such assistance activities are provided directly to those in need and through 25 partners in 11 different sectors of intervention. UNHCR also has ongoing partnerships with national and local authorities, including the Greek Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, the Municipality of Athens, the Municipality of Thessaloniki and Municipality of Livadia.

Situation Overview in Italy

On 31 October, 171,938 persons were accommodated in reception centres in Italy. Among them, 133,727 persons were in temporary reception facilities, 1,225 in hotspots, and 14,015 in first line reception centres. Additionally, as of 12 October 2016, 22,971 persons were accommodated in second line facilities, i.e. the so-called System of Protection for Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR) centres. More people are staying in Italy compared to previous years due to the implementation of the hotspot approach and increased controls at the borders with France, Switzerland and Austria.

Towards the end of October, charity- and municipality-organized transit centres were increasingly overcrowded at the Italy-France border in Ventimiglia (715 persons counted while official capacity is 360 places), at the Italy-Switzerland border in Como (357 persons counted while official capacity is 280 places) as well as in Milan (322 persons while official capacity is 193 places). Persons registered at the facilities mainly originate from Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan. During the month of October, UNHCR visited transit facilities in Ventimiglia, Como and Milan carrying out capacity-building activities for the benefit of local authorities and NGOs on asylum and relocation.

In close cooperation with the government and other partners, UNHCR in Italy provides services in areas of sea arrivals and in hotspots. In this context, UNHCR is supporting the intra-European relocation programme by providing advice and counselling support to potential beneficiaries and also gives advice to strengthen the reception system. UNHCR is also directly involved in monitoring reception standards and provides support to the Italian authorities regarding the identification and referral of vulnerable groups. To support of the government, UNHCR participates directly in refugee status determination in the decentralized Territorial Commissions and advises the government on the reform of the asylum system. Additionally, UNHCR has deployed experts on child protection and sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) who are currently engaged in supporting UNHCR's office in Italy to draft a protection and response strategy. It also contributes to the implementation of the resettlement programme. During the month of October, 13 persons were resettled to Italy under the country's resettlement programme. Most of these activities are either funded by the Government of Italy or by EU AMIF.

Situation Overview in Serbia

The total number of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers in Serbia rose from 5,700 in September to 6,300 in the second half of October. Based on available government and UNHCR data on this population, the main nationalities include around 42% from Afghanistan, 16% from the Syrian Arab Republic 10% each from Iraq and Pakistan. Children account for 40% while men make up 49% and women 11%. Over 76% were accommodated in governmental facilities, including in five Asylum Centres, four Transit Centres and two Reception Centres, with many facilities exceeding their capacities. Close to 1,000 asylum-seekers of the population of concern in Serbia squatted in unsanitary and unheated derelict buildings of Belgrade city centre. As temperatures began to drop, authorities and agencies intensified their efforts to encourage them to move to governmental facilities instead. Additionally, UNHCR and several civil society organizations provided assistance, counselling and facilitated many referrals, including to asylum procedures in Serbia, registration with the police, and medical services.

Situation Overview at the Serbia-Hungary border

During the month of October, 1,088 asylum-seekers and migrants entered Hungary out of which the police apprehended 164 inside the country after crossing the border irregularly, while 924 people entered through the transit zones on the border with Serbia.

Since the new border regulations came into force on 05 July 2016 allowing the police to return to the other side of the border fence people intercepted within 8 km of the border, the police reported that 7,525 people were prevented from entering the country irregularly and a further 6,311 were intercepted inside Hungary within 8 km of the border and escorted back to the other side of the border fence. Additionally, the installation of a new type of border fence is underway at Gara and a service road to improve the reaction time of border guards has been completed along the border. This new 150 km long path along the border fence would enable the police and soldiers to continuously patrol also in winter conditions. The road which is 3.5 m wide can only be used by police and military units.

In late October, the Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) informed UNHCR that as of 02 November, asylum claim processing will follow the general office hours in the transit zones (08:00 – 16:30) on weekdays and no admissions will take place during weekends, resulting in a further reduction in total admission numbers from up to 210 per week to up to 100 per week. The 24/7 presence of police and social workers will remain unchanged.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS

Protection, Humanitarian Assistance and Technical Support

Greece

Achievements and Impact

- Following the approval from the government on 27 September, an inter-agency effort to distribute winterization assistance to 47,382 asylum-seekers started on 17 October. An estimated total of 109,513 winter non-food items (NFIs) were distributed in 47 mainland sites and on five islands. NFIs for the winter were also distributed thanks to funding by European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO), Zara and UNIQLO. During the reporting period, 246 prefab housing units were installed in various sites across Greece, including Katsikas, Lagadikia, Chorygi, Schistso, Filippiada, Alexandria, while others are planned for Kara Tepe and Moria in November. Structural upgrades such as heating are foreseen whilst alternative solutions will be sought for places that do not have sufficient electrical power, which the Ministry of Migration Policy (MoMP) will address.
- On 10 October, 700 child asylum-seekers started attending 16 primary and secondary public schools (45 afternoon reception classes) as planned by the Ministry of Education (MoE). UNHCR, UNICEF, and Save the Children coordinated closely with the MoE for the arrangement on the mainland and continued to advocate for the smooth and gradual integration of refugee children in the open accommodation sites into the national education system. UNHCR provided interpretation support in various locations. Children were warmly received by the faculty of the schools, despite the protests which were staged at some sites including Profitis, north of Thessaloniki, Derveni-Dion in northern Greece

and Platonos in Attica. In Konitsa, 30 Syrian children were enrolled in the first class of the primary school, where they were welcomed by the school principal, the local Mayor and 16 high school students (UNHCR figures).

- Currently, approximately 40% of the total people living in formal sites are covered by International NGOs cash assistance. This is equivalent to 15,500 people only residing in formal sites. In addition, 6,000 people receive cash from UNHCR outside of formal sites through its accommodation scheme. In total, about 21,500 asylum-seekers receive cash assistance in Greece. Following a meeting with ECHO and starting from January 2017, UNHCR aims at providing cash assistance to 30,000 people by March 2017 (which would constitute 15,000 in accommodation schemes and 15,000 in formal sites). ECHO is reviewing the capacity of different cash actors in Greece and will decide which agency and/or consortium will roll out a full cash program as of April 2017. A decision on cash for winter was suspended in order to ensure that people receive cash assistance in all sites before giving top up assistance.
- In support of the Greek authorities' efforts to expand reception capacity for asylum-seekers, UNHCR's accommodation project funded by the European Union reached 17,018 places as of 31 October, representing more than 85% of the 20,000 target of UNHCR and its partners by the end of 2016. During the reporting period, 3,982 new accommodation spaces were established which is the greatest achievement since the beginning of the project. Over 16,360 persons have benefitted from the project so far, which includes the cumulative number of current and past places occupied, persons relocated to EU Member States and irregular departures and/or people who have departed from the accommodation without notifying UNHCR of their departure.
- Between May and the end of October 2016, UNHCR has made 552 additional places available for UASC (from 70 to 622). UNHCR is currently funding 55% of the available places in shelters for UASC (622 out of 1,140 places). Most of the shelters are for boys aged 15-17 as they represent 90% of the UASC population. However, UNHCR also funds shelters for girls and boys below 14 years of age.
- Following the MoMP's endorsement of the 'Minimum Standards of Safe Spaces for Unaccompanied Children (UACs) in Open Sites', UNHCR will provide support to ensure that the agreed upon framework is put into effect in order to open new shelters while maintaining while upholding criteria such as standards for site selection, infrastructure, procedure and proper placement of the UAC and services and staff. The creation of safe zones in open accommodation sites seems to be the only viable option to address both the need to provide care to UACs and to provide urgent safety and protection needs to UACs including immediate transfer of children out of detention. The MoMP and Ministry of Labour (MoL) will conduct a rapid assessment. The assessment should be used as a prerequisite for referring UAC for accommodation and support within the safe zones. In regards to the selection of the safe zones within the sites, there will be joint rapid assessment visits with representatives from the Ministries and members of the Child Protection Sub Working Group during November at the 15 sites that are part of the winterization plan in order to assess the sites in relation to the minimum standards.
- UNHCR continued to support the Asylum Service (AS) in the capacity-building of its caseworkers and quality assurance of asylum procedures in older and recently-established Regional Asylum Offices. UNHCR and the AS have appointed focal points for the mainstreaming of the requests to reschedule missed appointments on the mainland. On the islands, UNHCR provided information to new arrivals prior to registration. An important development concerning the asylum procedures is the issuance of the Ministerial Decision 12205/16 Aug. 2016 on the "Provision of legal aid to applicants for international protection", which provides the implementation of state-led provision of legal aid at the second instance of the asylum procedures as it is a state obligation according to EU and national law. Free legal assistance is funded by UNHCR until the implementation of the system provided by the Ministerial Decision.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The situation on the mainland continues to be tense, with some incidents linked to protests arising in sites, mainly due to shelter conditions in certain sites including Malakas, Elliniko and A. Andreas. In Schisto and Skaramangas sites, residents have also protested requesting improvement to food and cash programmes. Although collaboration with the police is gradually improving, UNHCR remains concerned about the security and safety situations within the sites for residents and humanitarian workers alike.
- The steady pace of arrivals during the month to Samos, Lesbos and Chios continues to pose security and safety concerns for all actors including residents in the sites, particularly on Lesbos and Chios.
- Decongestion plans for the islands are proceeding at a slow pace, resulting in an increased number of severely overcrowded sites including at Vathy RIC (Samos) where the presence is 1,841 in comparison to the 606 official bedding capacity.

- Following a vaccination campaign carried out at some sites in Greece, patients only received a partial first round of vaccinations leaving a considerable gap, while there should have been three rounds of the vaccine administered. Additionally, the islands were not included in the vaccination campaign since MSF, the main lead on the vaccination campaign, is not operating on the islands. UNHCR through partners is trying to fill this gap by procuring vaccines to finalize the first round and also provide vaccines for all of the three rounds at sites on the mainland and islands.
- The urban population of Athens cannot be concretely measured and there are only estimations based on assessments from the NGO 'The Salvation Army' that is operating in the area of Victoria Square. Urban housing and especially housing for people with specific needs is a concern as they face challenges such as geographical location, consistent funding and willingness of local participation to accommodate those in need. Furthermore family reunification cases require longer accommodation periods as they await the decision of their family reunification applications. However, NGOs still have shown their willingness to support initiatives related to the urban accommodation. In order to support people who live in informal housing collectives, UNHCR and partners continue to support the urban living strategy.
- Even though a comprehensive winterization plan has been initiated and a significant number of agencies are implementing or are planning to undertake winterization activities, there are still some sites in Northern Greece that will remain tented. As the weather conditions during winter are harsh in this particular region of Greece, this is a considerable gap and there is currently no possible timely solution for this problem.

The Western Balkans and Hungary

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Achievements and Impact

- During the last week of October, in the Transit Centre (TC) Tabanovce, refugees and migrants received winter items including winter clothing that was distributed by the City Red Cross (CRC) on the site. Additionally, with winter temperatures approaching, UNHCR donated two new prefab units for Tabanovce TC.
- The previously reported lack of food portions provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) have been addressed by CRC which has stepped up its distribution of food items. CRC, supported by UNHCR, continues to provide essential food and NFIs within TCs and during regular weekly visits in the areas populated by refugees and migrants not registered by the police. Assistance by CRC also includes first aid support in Lojane and Vaksince near the border with Serbia.
- MLSP prepared a specialized educational programme for children in the TCs with the support of UNICEF, which is expected to start early November. Further to the programme, SOPs on conducting education activities were also drafted. All service providers are expected to sign an Annex to the agreement with MLSP and to provide a detailed educational plan and schedule prior to implementation.
- Between 12 and 14 October, UNHCR organized a participatory assessment exercise with the involvement of representatives from various partner organizations. Focus groups and separate discussions were held providing individuals with a platform to raise their concerns including dissatisfaction with the overall situation. Participants of the assessment also included those with specific needs including the elderly, single-headed households, separated children and LGBTI persons among those residing in Vinojug, Tabanovce and Vizbegovo. Discussions were centered on gender based violence, access to rights, living conditions, voluntary repatriation and integration.
- The hospital in Kumanovo was reconstructed during the month, with the Minister of Health stating that the renovated wing will be used to provide refugees and migrants with adequate medical care.
- As of 27 October, social workers resumed their presence in the TCs after the recruitment process was finalized. With their presence, an improvement in the referral of specific cases and quality of overall case management is expected to ensue.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Freedom of movement for asylum-seekers in the transit centres remained an enduring concern during the reporting period. At the end of the month, authorities announced that they would move asylum-seekers from both TCs to the Reception Centre for Asylum-Seekers in Vizbegovo, Skopje.² Prior to their transfer they were presented with different

² Note: Asylum seekers from TC Vinojug were moved on 03 November, whereas asylum seekers from TC Tabanovce were moved on 04 November.

options allowing them to maintain their status as asylum-seekers or forfeit it which was: to either accept being transferred to RC Vizbegovo and retain their status, move from the TC independently while covering their own daily expenses and retain their asylum-seeking status, or remain in the TC and lose their asylum-seeking status.

- The presence of a high number of persons potentially in need of international protection near the country's northern border with Serbia, known as an area utilized by smugglers, remained of concern, with close to 1,000 persons spotted in the area during the month. Additionally, security incidents targeting refugees and migrants continue emerging.
- UNHCR has observed inconsistent registration procedures and in some instances lack of registration at both TC Tabanovce and Vojvodina. During the reporting period, registration in TC Tabanovce has only taken place for some of the 49 persons who were accommodated in the TC after being pushed back from Serbia and they have yet to receive registration documents. The criteria upon which the police determine whether or not to register someone remains unclear and registration documents are not issued.
- UNHCR receives frequent allegations of numerous push-backs to Greece from FYR Macedonia each week. They concern both persons caught on FYR Macedonian territory who were pushed back to Greece and persons who were returned to FYR Macedonian territory from Serbia. There have also been reports of people pushed back from Serbia to FYR Macedonian territory without having entered through the country previously. A newly emerged practice of persons being pushed back and forth between FYR Macedonia and Serbia was also identified.

Serbia

Achievements and Impact

- On 14 October, a new Reception Centre (RC) with an overall capacity to accommodate 250 persons constructed with EU funding in Bujanovac (south Serbia) was officially opened. It was dedicated to shelter families, single women and UACs in good standards, with a first some 190 refugees transferred from Presevo RC. Authorities, UNHCR and partners established appropriate operational presence.
- On 10 October, two unaccompanied and separated refugee children from Afghanistan were accepted for resettlement and departed from Serbia to Sweden. UNHCR continues to promote and facilitate orderly legal pathways such as this for refugees to access effective protection solutions.
- On 28 October, marking UN Week, the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the Government of Serbia organized a special briefing on the refugee and migration situation in Serbia at the 12th UNCT Partner's briefing in Belgrade for representatives of the diplomatic corps, civil society, donors and international and national organizations. UN agencies reaffirmed their commitment to strongly promote and support additional humanitarian, developmental, budgetary, coordination and political support to allow the Government of Serbia to implement its Response Plan as well as the commitments of the recently-adopted New York Declaration. The UNCT later issued a [press release](#) on the event.
- With cold and damp weather approaching, UNHCR partners, Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT), Asylum Info Centre (AIC) and the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) distributed some 1,800 UNHCR blankets, over 2,300 winter jackets, 1,300 raincoats and many other items of footwear and clothing to refugees in Belgrade, and the north and west of Serbia.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Body lice spread in many governmental facilities accommodating refugees and migrants. On 28 October, the Institute for Public Health declared an 'epidemic' in Krnjaca Asylum Centre (Belgrade), Presevo Reception Centre (south), Subotica (north), Sid, Adasevci and Principovac Transit Centres (west) and introduced coordinated measures to a reduction by 50% of affected refugees and migrants (i.e. from around 900 to below 450) by the end of the reporting period. Disinfection measures included treatment of affected persons, washing of infested clothes at 60 degrees, steam-cleaning of beds/mattresses and spraying of the facilities.
- In light of colder weather, the situation in Belgrade city centre became more critical. Over 1,000 refugees and migrants, including several hundred UASCs, spent every night in unsanitary and unheated derelict buildings in Belgrade city centre. Authorities continued to advise agencies to stop providing assistance to refugees and migrants in the city centre and to refer them to the Asylum Centre of Krnjaca instead, even though was unable to accept new residents as it was already fully occupied. Additionally, Belgrade City Administration, reportedly backed by national authorities, instructed municipal authorities to curtail civil society activities for refugees and migrants in the city centre. The council of Savski Venac Municipality met on 24 October, where they decided not to extend its rent-free provision of premises to the Asylum Info Centre project of UNHCR on Nemanjina Street.

- On 12 October, some 230 men and boys were transferred from Subotica Transit Centre to the south of Serbia. While 121 arrived at the Presevo Reception Centre, UNHCR received testimonies alleging that the rest were taken to the border and unlawfully expelled to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. UNHCR continued to submit reports of this and similar accusations to the Government.

Croatia

Achievements and Impact

- On 04 and 18 October, UNHCR and Croatian Law Centre (legal implementing partner) organized two workshops for the airport and maritime border officials. Over 30 participants from all international airports and 25 participants from all international ports in Croatia attended trainings on fundamental human rights, international standards of refugee protection, access to territory and asylum procedures, and relevant provisions of asylum legislation.
- UNHCR, in cooperation with its partner the Croatian Red Cross, organized a resettlement study visit to the Czech Republic. The purpose of the visit was to familiarize the participants with good practices and learn more about resettlement processing. There were 12 participants from relevant government institutions and civil society organizations providing assistance to asylum-seekers and refugees in Croatia. Participants of the workshop gained valuable insight into resettlement procedures and integration practices.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR has been informed through its implementing partners that despite several follow-ups and interventions, the Centres for Social Welfare continue to delay appointment of special guardians to UASC. As a direct consequence of such practices, access to asylum procedures and other services have been postponed contrary to provisions of the national child protection system. To address the gap, UNHCR is organizing an expert workshop for special guardians, child protection specialists and relevant ministries.
- The month saw a slight increase number of arrivals in the reception centres, primarily asylum-seekers transferred to Croatia under the Dublin regulation. In connection to this, UNHCR has observed instances of conflict and physical assaults among the accommodated asylum-seekers. UNHCR has been following up on the matter with the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to ensure enhanced security arrangements in the centres.

Slovenia

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR launched the “Dialogue with Refugee Counsellors”, platform designed to promote discussions on developments in asylum, refugee, migration and human rights law, and issues pertaining to the protection environment in Slovenia. The Dialogue with Refugee Counsellors serves as a space for local actors involved in protection and asylum matters to engage with the community via online forums and at scheduled conferences.
- UNHCR organized the first workshop for journalists from Slovenia to present the situation in the region. The Senior External Relations Officer from UNHCR’s regional office based in Budapest addressed key concepts, terminology questions and general issues in relation to refugee situations around the world and in Europe in particular.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In the month of October, several protests were held in Slovenia against the establishment of new reception centres, as planned for in the government’s contingency plan. UNHCR identified a need for cooperation with partners to address the growing negativity of the public towards the establishment of infrastructure that would benefit refugees and migrants in the case of a potential increased influx of refugees and migrants.

Hungary

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR staff is present in Rösztke and Tompa transit zones to monitor the admission procedures and coordinate referrals of cases with specific needs and to advocate for their prioritized entry to Hungary. UNHCR provides information to people waiting outside and to those admitted into the transit zones, including on the national asylum procedures and related rights and obligations.

- UNHCR together with partner Hungarian Helsinki Committee (HHC) is finalizing a leaflet to inform asylum-seekers about the operation of the transit zones and the border procedures. Once printed, the leaflet will be disseminated among asylum-seekers in the transit zones and the waiting areas.
- On 07 October, UNHCR met with civil aid group Sirius Help to discuss issues related to their capacity, plans and the coordination of the provision of assistance as they have recently gained access to provide assistance in the transit zones.
- On 25 October, UNHCR facilitated the visit of the Community of Sant'Egidio to the transit zones which delivered sawdust briquettes, sleeping mats, winter clothes, tea, sugar and children's toys in the waiting areas of both transit zones.
- UNHCR Hungary is coordinating with NGOs and local aid groups to complement the assistance currently provided to the people awaiting admission to the transit zones by UNHCR Serbia and its partners. The Office of Immigration and Nationality (OIN) continued to provide daily cold food packages both inside the transit zones and in the waiting areas, while several Hungarian NGOs contributed by distributing food and NFIs. IOM handed over NFIs including winter clothes, shoes, slippers, hygiene kits and blankets to the OIN for distribution within the transit zones. Moreover, Sirius Help continued to distribute NFIs, including clothes, hygiene items, sleeping bags and sawdust briquettes, in the waiting areas of both transit zones.
- UNHCR observed some improvements in the simplified age assessment procedure conducted by the military doctor in the transit zones as it is now conducted in a more thorough way. UNHCR is informing unaccompanied children assessed as adults on their right to request a second age assessment and a lawyer provided by UNHCR partner HHC is providing legal assistance.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gap

- By the end of October, around 155 refugees and migrants (61 in Röszke and 94 in Tompa) were in the waiting areas without adequate shelter, awaiting admission into the transit zones while the daily admission rate remained 10 people per day in each transit zone. The average waiting time for families and UACs was between 45-90 days and for single men up to 90 days. Families, UACs and single men transported by IOM or taking public transport to the transit zones from various reception facilities in Serbia spent up to two weeks in the waiting areas prior to being admitted to the transit zones.
- UNHCR observed that asylum-seekers detained, particularly those who were newly-admitted in the transit zones have a general lack of understanding of the access procedures, in particular as regards to whether they were subject to Dublin procedures or were found to be inadmissible on safe third country grounds. This may result in asylum-seekers failing to provide additional information on the reasons why they did not seek asylum in Serbia within the three day deadline in order to counter the safe third country notion. UNHCR followed up with OIN to make sure newly-admitted asylum-seekers understand their procedural status following their first interview. In addition, UNHCR continues to inform newly-admitted asylum-seekers about their rights and obligations under the border and Dublin procedures and the implications of the safe third country notion.
- UNHCR visited Kiskunhalas, Vámosszabadi and Bicske reception centres which all hosted under 100 asylum-seekers respectively. UNHCR noted some improvements based on recommendations made during its previous visits. However, UNHCR noted the high turnover with those leaving Hungary irregularly, conditions in Vámosszabadi remained poor despite the ongoing refurbishments, lack of information on services available to asylum-seekers at Vámosszabadi, and at Kiskunhalas reports of difficulty accessing the sports hall and insufficient amounts of food particularly for those with dietary restrictions. UNHCR is following up with the management to address the identified gaps.

Working in partnership

In line with the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM), UNHCR supports the government's coordination efforts at central and local level in Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Turkey. In Hungary, UNHCR chairs a coordination forum including UN agencies, IGOs, NGO partners and non-state institutions. This includes support to crisis management teams and facilitation of general and sectoral coordination meetings. Besides cooperation with governments, UNHCR also operates closely with the European Commission and relevant EU Agencies, including Frontex and EASO. A full list of partners is available [here](#).

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan 2016 (RMRP), co-led by UNHCR and IOM, brings together more than 60 UN agencies and NGOs in response to the refugee and migrant crisis affecting Southern Europe and the Western Balkans.

As of 20 November 2016, the RMRP is 67% funded; USD 449.8 million in earmarked contributions have been received against USD 669.9 million in total requirements.

UNHCR is appealing for USD 380.3 million under the framework of the RMRP, against which USD 214.6 million in earmarked contributions has been received (56% funded).

Detailed funding information on the RMRP (inter-agency and UNHCR-specific) is available [here](#).

UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by donors who have contributed to its operations in response to the emergency response in Europe, as well as those who have contributed to UNHCR programmes with unrestricted and broadly earmarked funds.

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Links:

UNHCR, [Greek heroes honoured at 2016 UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award ceremony](#)

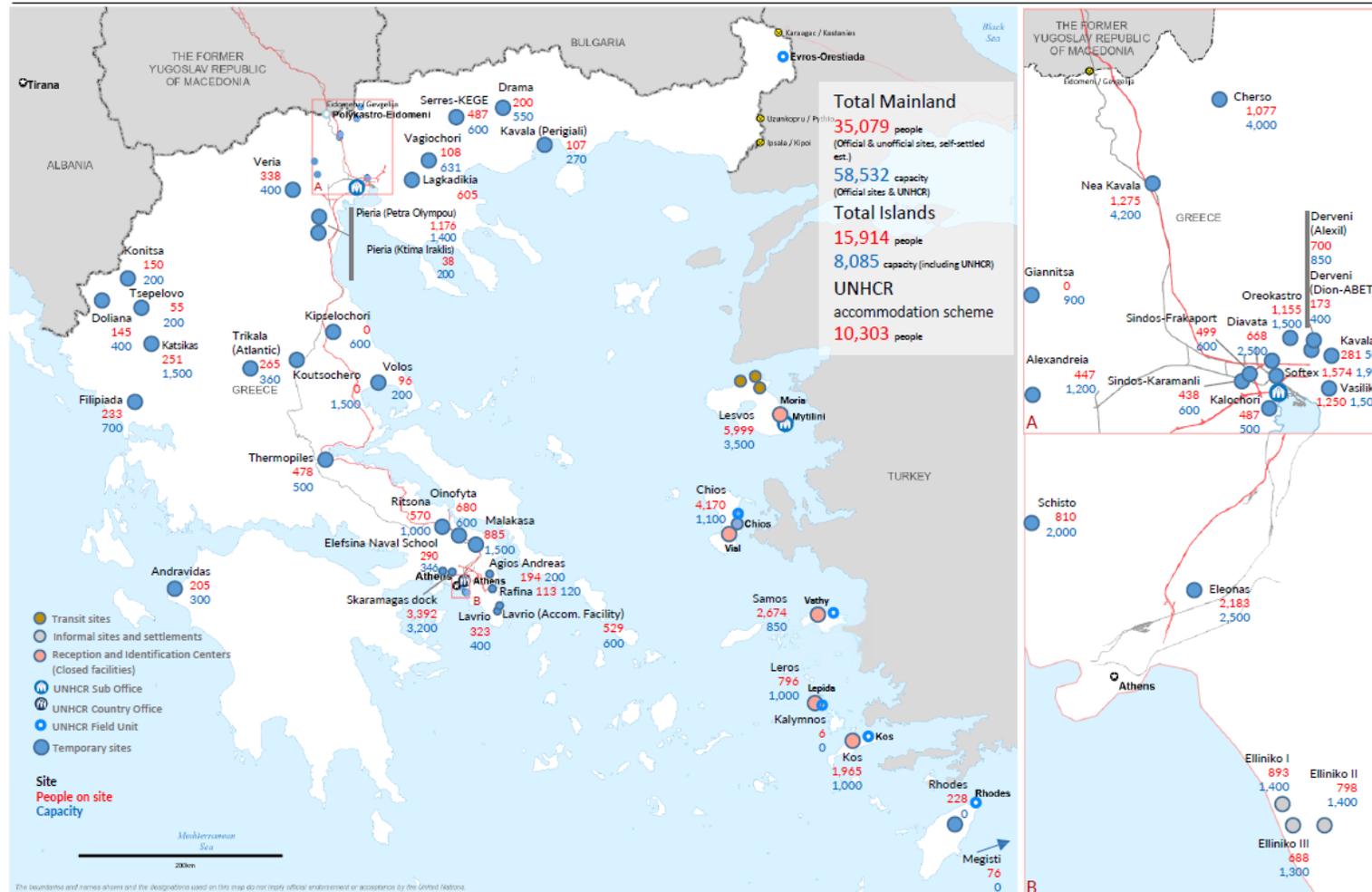
UNHCR, [UNHCR welcomes 'unprecedented force and resonance' of New York Declaration](#)

UNHCR, [Mediterranean death toll soars to all-time high](#)

UNHCR, [Fire at Reception Site on Lesbos Island, Greece](#)

ANNEXES

Europe Refugee Emergency Daily map indicating capacity and occupancy (Governmental figures) As of 02 November 2016 08:00 a.m. EET



Presence and capacity are based on Governmental figures from the Coordination Centre for the Management of the Refugee Crisis, as of 02/11/2016 08:00 a.m. Eastern European Time. Online map with additional information: <http://www.unhcr.gr/sites>

