



# Refugee and Migrant Crisis in Europe

## Humanitarian Situation Report # 20

15 February 2017

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

### Highlights

- *The trend of increased numbers of refugees and migrants on the Central Mediterranean route continues in 2017 - more than 80 per cent of all sea arrivals during the first 6 weeks of the year were registered in Italy.*
- *Major risks confronted by refugee and migrant children and women along this route remain to be detention, extortion, gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and drowning at sea.*
- *In January 2017, UNICEF-supported outreach teams identified 1,793 children at risk in Turkey and across Europe, while 739 children, including adolescents, joined structured education activities in Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In addition, 256 babies and infants accessed IYCF services, and 1,438 children received culturally appropriate basic supplies in Serbia and Italy.*
- *As UNICEF enters into its third year of response to the Refugee and Migrant Crisis in Europe, in January it launched its Humanitarian Appeal for 2017 requesting a total of US\$ 43,452,000 for continued interventions in response to this complex crisis.*
- *In line with the inter-agency Refugee and Migrant Plan for Europe, UNICEF interventions will help government institutions and civil society organizations address the immediate, as well as middle to long-term needs of refugee and migrant children by sustaining service provision while strengthening national capacities in the areas of child protection, education and child rights monitoring.*

**6,856**

# of arrivals in Europe through Italy, Greece and Spain in January 2017  
(UNHCR, 17 February 2017)

**26 per cent**

children among arrivals in Italy and Greece in January 2017  
(UNHCR, 17 February 2017)

**386,635**

# of child asylum-seekers in Europe between January and December 2016  
(Eurostat, 8 February 2017)

**98,688**

# of child arrivals in Europe through Greece, Italy, Spain and Bulgaria in 2016  
(UNHCR, 9 February 2017)

**33,424**

# of unaccompanied and separated children arriving in Europe through Greece, Italy and Bulgaria in 2016  
(UNHCR, 11 January 2017)

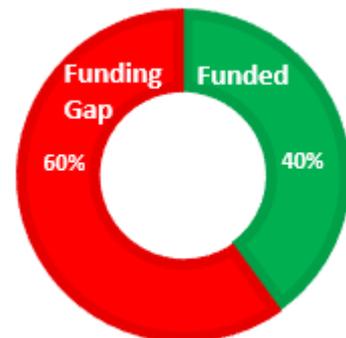
**24,700**

# of estimated stranded children in Greece and other southeastern European countries as of January, 2017  
(UNHCR, 31 January 2017)

UNICEF RESULTS WITH PARTNERS (EXTRACTS)	UNICEF and Partners Response	
	Targets 2017	Total Results
# of at-risk children (incl. UASC) identified through screening by outreach teams and child protection support centres*	10,350	1,793
# of children aged 6-17 including adolescents participating in structured education activities**	11,150	739
# of infants (under 2) accessed mother and baby care centre services, including health services and nutrition services***	2,600	256

\*Combines results in Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Italy  
 \*\* Combines results in Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia  
 \*\*\* Combines results in Greece and Serbia

**UNICEF Appeal 2017**  
**US\$ 43,452,000**



## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

In January 2017, children made up 26 per cent of the 6,856<sup>1</sup> refugees and migrants, who arrived in Europe through Italy, Greece and Spain. According to latest available data, out of the 381,892 refugees and migrants who arrived in Europe last year through the Mediterranean and by land through Bulgaria, 98,688 were children (including 34,500 unaccompanied or separated children). This number represents less than one per cent of all children, affected by war, violence and instability in top countries of origin (Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Eritrea and Nigeria). During the same period, 386,635 first-time asylum claims were registered by children across Europe<sup>2</sup>- more than two thirds of them were in Germany, followed by France, Austria, Italy, Switzerland and Sweden.

The trend of increased numbers of refugees and migrants on the Central Mediterranean Route, observed during the second half of 2016, has continued in 2017. Out of the 6,856 sea arrivals in Europe in January 2017, 65 per cent were registered on Italian shores. Although the proportion of children among arrivals in Italy is relatively small, there are significant concerns with major risks faced by refugees and migrants (among whom children are the most vulnerable) along the route through North Africa and the Mediterranean, which include drowning at sea, detention, extortion, gender-based violence, abuse and exploitation by smugglers and armed groups.

National authorities and agencies continue to improve the reception conditions for refugee and migrant children in Greece, Italy, Germany and across the Balkans. Yet many refugee and migrant children have been living for months, sometimes a year, in reception and accommodation centres, which do not provide age and gender-appropriate shelter, protection and services. Children and families' mental health and overall well-being has been affected by long waits and an uncertain future due to backlogs in asylum and relocation procedures.

Despite the recent acceleration of relocation of refugees and migrants from Greece and Italy, by 31 January only 3,048 children, including 233 UASC<sup>3</sup>, have been relocated from Greece and Italy (only 1 from Italy). According to the European Commission, there are many challenges related to the relocation of UASC, one of the major ones relating to married children (particularly when they are under the age of 17) since many Member States have legal obstacles to allow the relocation of this category of separated children (e.g. the adult marrying a minor may be sentenced). As a consequence, they reject relocation requests submitted.

With the improvement of weather conditions in the past few weeks, irregular cross-border movements increased again, leading to border incidents and further complication of the situation in Serbia (currently hosting 7,900 refugees and migrants, including 3,103 children).

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

### GREECE

**Child Protection:** UNICEF is currently supporting quality child protection services in 11 Child and Family Support Hubs (Blue Dots) in open reception facilities, temporary hotel accommodations and increasingly in urban sites in Athens, and more recently Thessaloniki and Ioannina. Since the beginning of activities in 2016, 1,535 children have benefitted from services on regular basis, including 332 newly registered children in January 2017. In addition, in January, following severe weather conditions in the Greek Islands, UNICEF responded to the urgent needs of refugee and migrant children who were evacuated from Moria Reception and Identification Centre to urban hotels in Lesbos through the establishment of a child-friendly space there. It currently provides 45 refugee and migrant children with psychosocial support and recreational activities.

In 2017 UNICEF continues to support the provision of specialised psychological and mental health services to vulnerable refugee and migrant children and families in Athens and five reception facilities in Attica region (Elefsina, Elliniko, Agios Andreas/NeaMakri, Rafina and Elaionas). Since the beginning of the project, a total of 349 children and families benefitted from these services (including 103 newly registered children in January 2017). This work was further complemented by a training for 50 frontline workers on psychosocial assistance.

UNICEF continues to support the provision of urgently needed shelter and comprehensive care and protection services for unaccompanied children through support to two UASC shelters in Athens and Mytilini, Lesbos, respectively, which as of end of January were accommodating 38 children. UNICEF continues to support EKKA to improve their data management system. UNICEF is expanding the scope of its response to identifying alternatives to institutional care for UASC including through planning for the establishment of UASC safe zones in reception facilities and piloting supported shelters in host communities for UASC in partnership with national authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR: <http://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>

<sup>2</sup> Eurostat, data extracted on 8 February 2017. The significantly higher number of asylum claims compared to arrivals is due to backlogs in national asylum systems, registering people in 2016, who have actually arrived in 2015.

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF-Greece Dashboard, January 2017: [https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/General\\_data\\_January\\_2017\\_\(1\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/ceecis/General_data_January_2017_(1).pdf)

**Education:** In January 2017, three additional non-formal education centres opened doors for refugee and migrant children in urban Athens and Ioannina (Northwestern Greece), benefiting 408 children (3 to 17 years old). These centres are among the first of their kind- offering non-formal education to children in areas with limited service coverage. Activities include play-based early learning for 3-5 years old, as well as language lessons (Arabic, English and Greek), mathematics and life-skills classes for 6-17 years old. The majority of children are Syrians, Iraqis and Afghans. With these new locations, the total number of beneficiaries of UNICEF-supported non-formal education activities has increased to 692 children (396 boys and 296 girls).

In addition, UNICEF reached 831 children across the country through the provision of school supplies.

**Child Rights Monitoring:** In January 2017, UNICEF's continuous support to the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children in Greece led to [increased monitoring of the situation of](#) refugee and migrant children in Greece [and related awareness raising and public advocacy](#) on critical issues including guardianship and school integration. With the support of UNICEF, in January, the Deputy Ombudsman officially launched the Network for the Rights of Children on the Move, a coalition of 20 local and international organisations working with refugee and migrant children, who will carry out joint monitoring and evidence based advocacy on the evolving situation with initial results expected by early March.



*Adolescents between 16 to 17 years old, learning at Skaramangas site  
©UNICEF/Greece/2017/lmoto*

## ITALY

During the first month of 2017, UNICEF continued scaling up its activities in Palermo, with support to the improvement of minimum protection standards in centres and facilitating access to community services and recreational activities for UASC. As a result, 180 UASC in five centres benefitted from learning activities, while another 170 UASC in a pilot first-line reception centre accessed community-based recreational activities. In addition, 40 per cent of all children in the pilot centres received legal counselling.

UNICEF continued with the implementation of capacity-building activities in collaboration with the University of Palermo (reaching a total of 155 frontline workers so far), and started a joint project with the Ombudsperson and local authorities to develop a pool of 100 trained volunteer guardians for refugee and migrant UASC.

As part of its cooperation with the Italian Coast Guard, since the beginning of the year UNICEF-supported teams, composed of educators and cultural mediators, joined six rescue operations at sea, leading to the identification, registration and assistance to 380 UASC. Special tools for the identification and registration of children have been developed and used during six rescue operation missions. In addition, 77 refugee and migrant women and girls received dignity kits on the rescue boats.

In January, UNICEF-supported outreach team in Rome identified 349 unaccounted boys and girls, who had either dropped from the formal system or had never went through reception services. Outreach activities cover border areas, bus/train stations and other locations, where UASC might be concentrating.

## TURKEY<sup>4</sup>

**Child protection:** UNICEF-supported outreach teams deployed along the western coast of Turkey identified an additional 64 children at risk (20 boys and 16 girls, including one unaccompanied minor), of whom 12 (6 boys, 6 girls) were provided with immediate child protection services. In addition, nearly 7,200 Syrian refugee children benefitted from psychosocial support in Child and Adolescent Friendly Spaces in camps and host communities across the country.

**Basic Needs:** In January, UNICEF-supported teams in Western Turkey distributed winter clothes to 1,200 refugee and migrant children living in informal settlements near the transit town of Torbalı, Izmir.

## THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

**Child Protection:** In January, UNICEF in cooperation with Save the Children and the National Institute for Social Activities, finalized a training package on working with children in humanitarian emergencies, natural disasters, conflicts and internal clashes. It aims at

<sup>4</sup> More about UNICEF response in Turkey can be found in the Turkey country situation report and the situation report on the Regional Refugee and Resilience to the Syrian crisis.

increasing the capacity of social workers and other social protection staff in all 30 Centers for Social Work across the country. A first group of 56 social protection professionals were trained in January. UNICEF also supported authorities in creating a pool of some 150 social workers across the country with experience in emergency response, who can be easily mobilized in case of emerging needs.

In addition, UNICEF in partnership with the national Chamber of Psychologists, developed and conducted a training for 46 frontline workers and 10 project coordinators in the transit centres, focusing on mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for refugees and migrants. To further strengthen the provision of services, a coordination structure was created to coordinate provision of MHPSS across the country.

To increase the capacity of partners to deliver community-based youth support, UNICEF is currently finalizing a training package for working with adolescents.

**Education:** In 2017, UNICEF expanded non-formal education activities for children accommodated in the Safe House and the Asylum Center in Vizbegovo, in addition to activities in the two Transit centres. A total of 39 school-age children are following regular non-formal education in these locations.

**Health and Nutrition:** UNICEF continues with the provision of counselling on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices in transit centres, benefitting 44 mothers and children in the first month of the year. UNICEF is also supporting the distribution of age-appropriate food for children in the centres.

## SERBIA

**Child Protection:** In 2017, UNICEF continues to support the identification of child protection risks, as well as the organisation of structured recreational activities in Krnjača, Šid, Bujanovac, Preševo and Dimitrovgrad, benefitting 787 children.

UNICEF ongoing collaboration with the social welfare system in Preševo, Bujanovac, Belgrade, Šid and Subotica, as well as the Serbian Crisis Response and Policy Centre, led to the identification, referral and support to 457 UASC during the first month of the year.

UNICEF enhanced support to authorities and partners in addressing the immediate needs of refugee and migrant children, including UASC in informal shelters in the Serbian capital, and is currently negotiating the set-up of regular services in the new Obrenovac centre in Belgrade, where many of them have now been relocated.

**Education:** As of 2017 UNICEF is supporting two Toy Libraries for young children (3 to 6 years old) in Bujanovac and Principovac centres (focusing on early childhood education), programmes for the development of digital competencies for youth in Šid, Principovac and Adaševci, and non-formal education activities for children aged 7 to 12 in Bujanovac, Preševo and Šid. Further to the capacity-building efforts for frontline workers in the Education sector in December 2016, UNICEF is currently monitoring implementation of non-formal education interventions.

As a result of joint efforts by the Serbian Government, UNICEF and partners, 42 UASC have now been enrolled in formal education in Belgrade. This is a first step of a plan towards the inclusion of refugee and migrant children into regular schools. In this regard, UNICEF is working with government authorities, academia and partners to design and roll out a comprehensive capacity-building programme for schools (including intercultural competencies, anti-discrimination, individualisation and support plans, including language support).

**Health and Nutrition:** UNICEF supports Primary Health Centres and health professionals in 7 locations (Belgrade, Horgoš, Kelebija, Dimitrovgrad, Preševo, Bujanovac and Šid) in providing assistance to pregnant and breastfeeding refugee/migrant women on infant and IYCF and child nutrition. Nurses also follow the screening and everyday care for children aged 6-59 months for undernutrition. This combines with broader advocacy and guidance to stakeholders on the provision and distribution of age-appropriate food in reception and accommodation centres. Consultations have also been initiated to ensure that all refugee and migrant children receive needed support from the national health system (particularly for young children), including with regards to vaccination.

**Winterization and basic supplies:** In January 2017, a total of 1,351 children in Preševo, Bujanovac, Šid, Kelebija and Horgoš received winter clothes and shoes, along with different hygiene items. In addition, 340 children in Principovac and Adaševci centres received winter clothes kits (including trousers, winter jacket, sweatshirt, scarf, gloves and thermal underwear).



*A boy participates in recreational activities at the UNICEF-supported child-friendly space at the Šid Transit Centre, Serbia, Friday 20 January 2017. © UNICEF/UN049541/Vas*

## CROATIA

Through programme visits and regular meetings with implementation partners, UNICEF is continuously contributing to the improvement of the situation of refugee and migrant children in the country.

UNICEF supports the development of Child Protection Protocol for UASC, and supports recreational and learning activities for some 50 children seeking asylum in Croatia. This couples with ongoing support to the Ministry of Education on the development and roll-out of a capacity-building programme for Croatian teachers, aiming to facilitate the integration of refugee and migrant children in the formal education system.

## SLOVENIA

Findings of the mapping of the Slovenian child protection system have been presented to the inter-ministerial committee, and next steps are currently being defined to address the gaps and recommendations. In addition, in January UNICEF supported relevant government authorities and the Social Protection Institute in finalizing and publishing a Situational Analysis on Children, which will serve as a basis for 10-year national plan for the improvement of the situation of all children at risk, including refugee and migrant children. With this regard, UNICEF will support the Slovenian Government in developing a comprehensive child wellbeing index within the first draft national plan (expected in June 2017).

On request from the Slovenian Government, UNICEF will also provide technical support on the development of a new Guardianship Law, which will include refugee and migrant children.

## BULGARIA

In January, 1,100 children accommodated in the reception and registration centres for refugees received winter clothes and shoes. UNICEF also scaled up support to recreational and non-formal learning activities for refugee and migrant children in the three reception centres in Sofia, benefitting 190 children (mostly 10 to 15 years old), including nine children with disabilities.

In addition, through partners UNICEF continued to provide legal counselling and information to the UASC about their rights, possibilities for family tracing and reunification, as well as the risks of irregular migration.

## GERMANY

In January, UNICEF and partners agreed on the process around the revision of the [Minimum Standards for the Protection of Children, Adolescents and Women in Refugee Accommodation Centres](#), with two additional sets of thematic standards- one on people with disabilities and one on LGBTIQ rights.

As part of its capacity-building strategy, UNICEF is currently planning a Training of Trainers on 6-10 March, which will prepare trainers for the roll-out of trainings across 25 refugee reception and accommodation centres across the country (expected to be completed between March and May 2017).

In addition, coaching plan has been developed to support the roll-out of the standards in refugee reception and accommodation centres. The draft coaching plan is currently under review by the Ministry of Family Affairs and members of the welfare organizations.

UNICEF is currently finalizing the assessment of the monitoring systems in the 25 selected refugee reception and accommodation centres. Interviews with service providers and the supervisory authorities will complete the assessment. As part of a new structure of the joint response with the German Government a working group on monitoring will be set up to develop guidance on quality assurance and monitoring for refugee centres in Germany. UNICEF is also supporting the development of national child rights indicators, which will have a direct impact on children across the country.

## Communications and Advocacy

In the reporting period January-February, UNICEF's [media](#) and [advocacy](#) as well as on visual and digital [products](#) focussed on the plight of children suffering a severe winter in Greece and the Balkans; health needs and consequences; increased drownings of children on the Central Mediterranean route, impact of the UK Dubbs-Dublin agreement on children stranded or seeking asylum in Greece and a call to the EU-Malta summit.

On the eve of the EU-Malta summit, in a [statement and a press briefing on 3 February](#) – UNICEF drew attention to the ‘deadliest winter for refugee and migrant children crossing the Central Mediterranean’ which had led to record numbers of children drowning – an estimated 190 children in just 3 months. UNICEF also made an urgent appeal to leaders of EU meeting in Malta to prevent the exploitation and trafficking of children; not to return children into harms way; to invest in strengthened child protection in Libya and credible resettlement and family reunification programmes so that desperate refugees and migrants do not have to turn to smugglers and risk their lives.

UNICEF (8<sup>th</sup> Feb) also [called for expediting family reunification under the Dublin regulations](#), especially after the recent decision to stop transfer of refugee and migrant children to the U.K. under the Dubbs programme.

A [new Advocacy Brief](#), providing a closer look into the issue of access to health services for refugee and migrant children and women in Europe. Based on evidence that ill health can be a fundamental and on-going obstacle to integration, and yet many refugee and migrant children and families still face significant barriers to accessing health care more than a year after living in their host country, UNICEF provides a number of practical recommendations to address this issue, including: prevent obstacles and provide refugee and migrant children with access to age and gender-appropriate public health services in the country, ensuring a clear firewall between health service providers and migration authorities; ensure that interpreters and other support services are available to enable provision of a quality mental and other health services for refugee and migrant children; a basic package of health care for all refugee and migrant mothers and infant that includes access to PHC, ante-natal care, early and new-born care, developmental monitoring and immunization services.



*Girls sit on a swing in the snow wearing winter clothes provided by UNICEF to refugee and migrant children at the Transit Centre in Principovac, Serbia, 20 January 2017. © UNICEF/UN049547/Vas*

In late January, to mark ongoing partnership with the DG ECHO for refugee and migrant children, UNICEF and EU's joint [action](#) including UASC, across Greece, received widespread social media across EU platforms and in various European languages. This helped to draw attention to the need for safe pathways for children and prevent violation of children's rights.

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME RESULTS - as of 31 January 2017

SUMMARY OF RESULTS	UNICEF and Implementing Partners* Response			
	Targets 2017	Total Results	Change since last report	
<b>CHILD PROTECTION</b>				
# of children (boys and girls) received psychosocial and other community-based child protection support in family support hubs, child friendly spaces and mother-baby corners	Greece	6,000	834	834
	Serbia	4,800	787	787
# of frontline workers trained on child protection standards/child protection in emergencies	Austria	500	-	-
	Bulgaria	300	-	-
	Croatia	50	-	-
	Germany	775	-	-
	Greece	500	57	57
	Italy	1,000	155	155
	Serbia	300	-	-
	Slovenia	200	-	-
	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	150	112	112
	Turkey	200	-	-
# of at-risk children (incl. UASC) identified through screening by outreach teams and child protection support centres	Greece	2,000	146	146
	Italy	4,700	729	729
	Serbia*	1,000	457	457
	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	150	91	91
	Turkey	2,500	36	36

# of children provided with legal aid and/or counselling	Bulgaria	2,000	34	34
<b>EDUCATION</b>				
# of children aged 6-17 including adolescents participating in structured education activities	Bulgaria	2,000	190	190
	Greece	5,000	549	549
	Serbia	4,000	Partners not yet reporting	
	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	150	34	34
# of children receiving school materials	Greece	5,000	692	692
# of children (3-5 years old) benefiting from early childhood activities	Greece	1,500	154	154
<b>HEALTH AND NUTRITION</b>				
# of infants (under 2) accessed mother and baby care centre services, including health services and nutrition services	Greece	1,000	38	38
	Serbia	1,600	218	218
# of mothers benefited from infant and young child feeding counselling at family support hubs, child friendly spaces and mother-baby corners	Greece	1,000	67	67
	Serbia	1,000	129	129
<b>WASH and BASIC SUPPLIES</b>				
# of children receiving culturally appropriate non-food items	Italy	1,000	77	77
	Serbia**	4,800	1351	1351
# of children receiving basic relief items	Turkey	37,500	1,762	1,762

#### Notes

\*\* Due to the relocation of refugees and migrants within Belgrade to the reception centres, the number of children at risk identified and registered in January 2017 is higher than in the previous months.

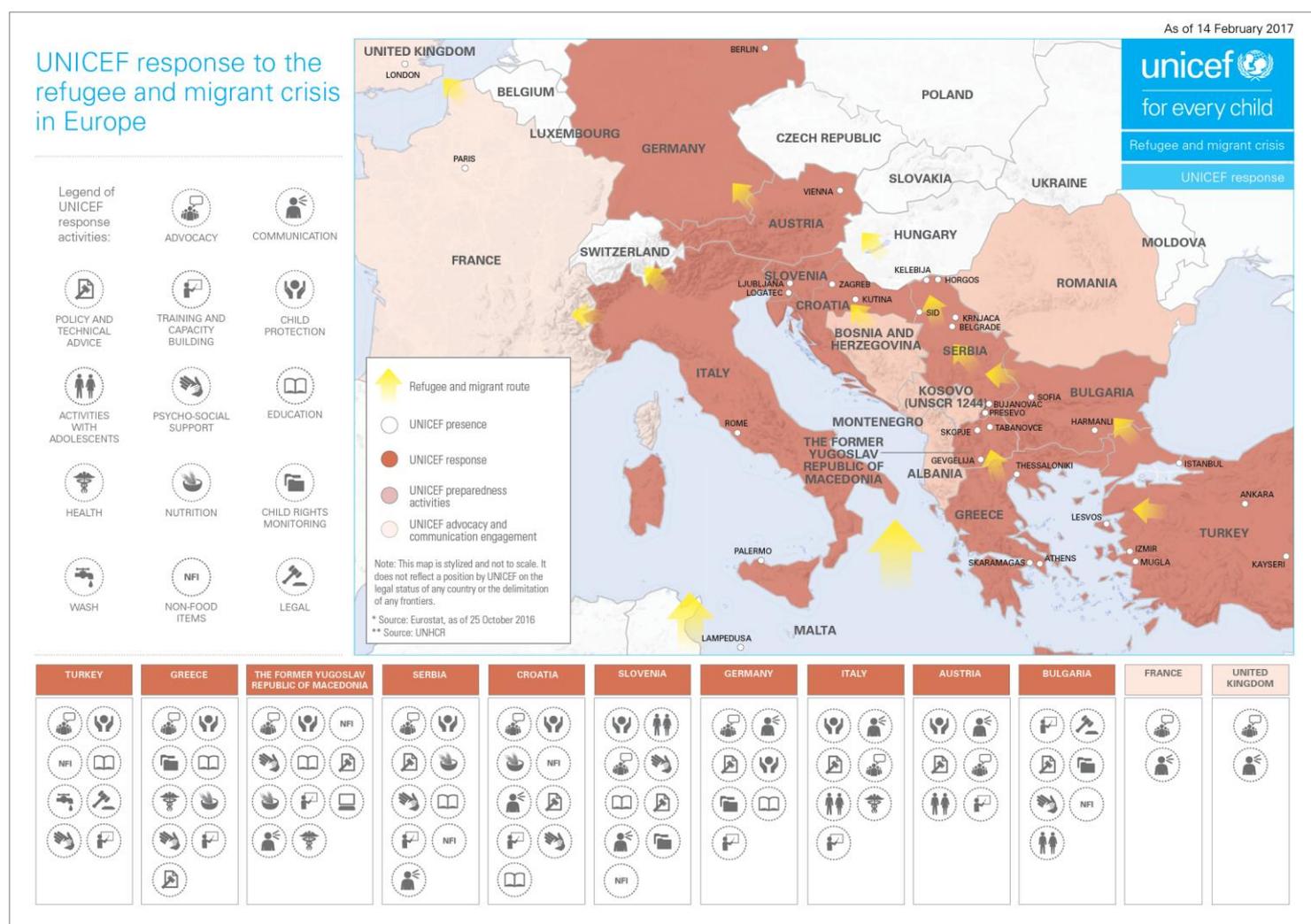
\*\*\* Results reflect a peak in the distribution of winter clothes in January; the numbers are expected to stabilise in the coming months (most of the winter clothes have now been distributed). Another peak in the distribution of summer clothes is expected during a spring/summer month.

*\*UNICEF partners on the ground include: ASAM, Turkish Red Crescent Society, Danish Refugee Council, IMPR Humanitarian and Welthungerhilfe in Turkey; the Deputy Ombudsman for Children, the National Center for Social Solidarity (EKKA), Solidarity Now, FAROS, Babel, IRC, SOS Village, ILIAKTIDA, IMC, DRC, British Council, ELIX, Apostoli and Finn Church Aid in Greece; la Strada/Open Gate, the Red Cross, Macedonian Nurses and Midwives Association (MANM), SOS Village, Save the Children in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; DRC, HCIT, SOS Village and Save the Children in Serbia; Society for Psychological Support and Roda in Croatia; Slovenska Philantropia, WAHA and PIC in Slovenia; Bulgarian Helsinki Committee in Bulgaria; INTERSOS in Italy.*

## Funding Update

Country	2017 Requirements	Funds Received	Funding gap	
	(US\$)	(US\$)	\$	%
<b>Countries with children on the move and children stranded – Eastern Mediterranean</b>				
Western Balkans	6,544,800	2,621,288	4,231,062	65%
Greece	17,920,000	9,077,502	8,842,498	49%
Turkey	2,500,000	0	2,500,000	100%
<b>Countries of destination and additional countries</b>				
Italy	5,165,000	480,180	4,684,820	91%
Germany	3,249,000	940,278	2,308,722	71%
Other countries of destination and planned additional countries	2,396,000	173,950	2,222,050	93%
<b>Regional and Global Support</b>				
Coordination, Advocacy, Communications, Technical support and preparedness*	5,677,200	4,220,891	1,456,309	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$43,452,000</b>	<b>\$17,514,088</b>	<b>\$25,937,912</b>	<b>60%</b>

\*Amount includes funds for country allocations



## Next SitRep: 13/03/2016

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