



KEY FIGURES

18,432

Medical interventions provided

939

Medical assistance to children

3,560

Unaccompanied minors identified

PRIORITIES

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

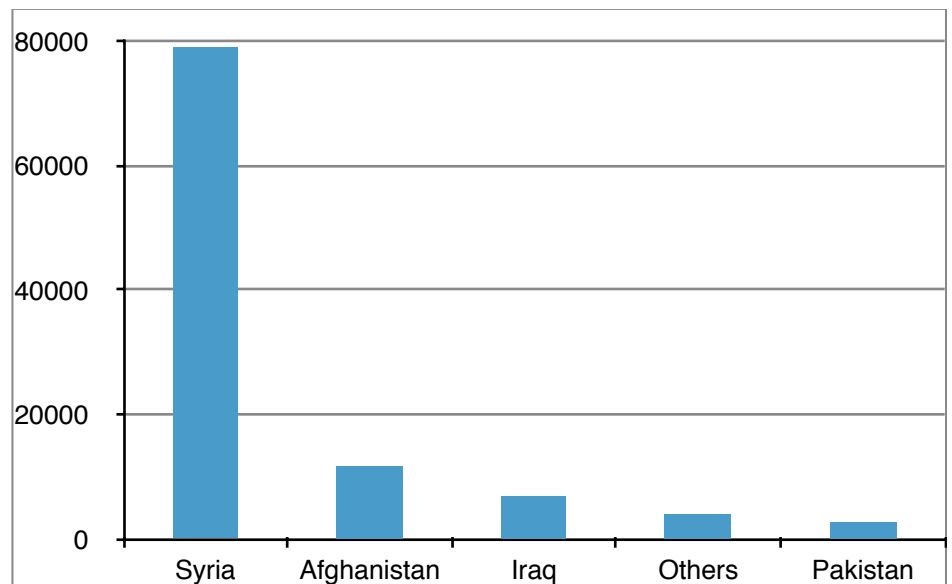
FYR MACEDONIA

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

23- 29 September 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 40,000 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into fyR Macedonia during the reporting period 23-29 September with a daily average of more than 5,700. The number of Afghans now constitutes 11% of the total new arrivals up from 8% during last reporting period.



Intention to apply for asylum: **105,007** applications have been filed from 19 June to 29 September 2015 (source: Ministry of Interior).

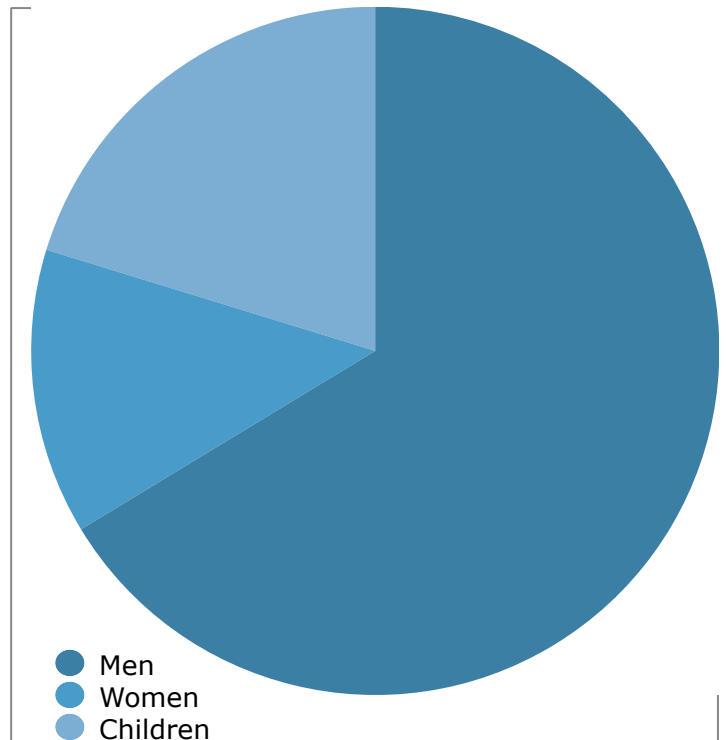


Information sharing before boarding the train in Vinograd. Photo UNHCR/A.Moller

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The Ministry of Interior's officially registered number of refugees and migrants crossing the border from Greece, continues to be high with 105,007 persons registered their intention to apply for asylum, including 21,270 children, of whom 3,560 are unaccompanied since 19 June until 29 September 2015. Of these 79,017 (75%) of the arrivals are Syrians, 11,478 (11%) Afghans, 6,839 (7%) Iraqis, 2,767 (3%) Pakistanis and the remainder represent other nationalities such as Somalis, Palestinians, Congolese and Cameroonians. 50 applications for asylum were registered out of which 37 were submitted by Syrians in the same period while from January to end of July 1,690 asylum applications were submitted.



Achievements



Protection

Achievements and Impact

- More than 40,000 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into FYR Macedonia during the reporting period 23-29 September with a daily average of more than 5,700. The number of Afghans now constitutes 11% of the total new arrivals up from 8% last reporting period.
- A two day training for police, army and special forces is currently being provided by UNHCR. Four two day trainings will be conducted this week and the next week, during which some 100 officers will be trained. The agenda for the workshop is based on the UNHCR Protection Training Manual for European Border and Entry Officials <http://www.unhcr.org/4d948c736.html>.
- The Ministry of Interior has maintained their decision to only use trains as transportation to the Serbian border.
- UNHCR has established a well-functioning mechanism with the UNHCR Greek for family reunification as several family members are temporarily separated.
- MYLA continues to work with the Special Forces to organize the boarding of the trains by giving priority to people with specific needs and the most vulnerable.
- During the reporting period approximately 827 women and 1,173 children were provided with emotional and psychosocial assistance in the UNICEF Child Friendly Spaces operated by NGO La Strada. 20 professionals (social workers, psychologists, pedagogues, translators and support staff) work in shifts to provide services to women and children every day of the week. La Strada identified and assisted 40 vulnerable individuals. The activities are funded by UNICEF, UNHCR and People in Need.

- During the reporting period approximately 5,600 persons were offered free legal advice at the Vinojug station by MYLA who also assisted 9 asylum seekers at the Vizbegovo Reception Center with their asylum procedure. MYLA also ensured prioritization for 100 vulnerable individuals for their registration. There are currently 10 MYLA translators working in shifts at the Vinojug site. The MYLA activities are funded by UNHCR.
- UNHCR has erected a fixed information point just after the border crossing to inform refugees about the registration procedures, services in the site and other useful information. This practice has proved to be efficient to mitigate tensions and ensure a more organized flow outside and inside the centre.



Food distribution at Vinojug. Photo UNHCR/ A.Moller

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR is currently in the process to set up a protection monitoring system using mobile data collection and is changing the data collection on population movements and profiles to an electronic version.

Health

Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period the Red Cross provided 18,432 medical interventions out of which 49 were pregnant women and 939 were children. Four wheelchairs were distributed.
- Nine mobile teams of the Red Cross are working in shifts to provide medical assistance and first aid in Gevgelija and Tabanovce. This activity is funded by UNHCR and Red Cross.
- UNICEF supported teams from La Strada continue to support to mothers and young children to maintain personal hygiene by providing access to bathing facilities and hygiene sets.
- 150 health professionals from the Emergency Medical Services, hospitals and public health centers in Gevgelija and Kumanovo regions took part of the Health and Migration workshops organized jointly by WHO and the Ministry of Health in the period 22 - 25 September. The participants discussed the key problems in the health response in the field in the past three months, the challenges and the future steps for the health sector response under the scenarios suggested in the MoH action plan for health and migration.

Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- Red Cross has procured additional 1,503 food parcels (family packages) and sufficient water for the expected increase in refugees.
- La Strada and Help the Refugees distributed 1,180 packages of baby food (most from UNICEF), 40 kg. fruit, 1,120 packages of biscuits for babies, 1,100 l water and 1280 bottles of children's drinkables. Nun distributed 650 bottles of juice, and sweets and chocolate for Eid celebration.
- UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and the WHO, developed informational materials to support mothers in maintaining breastfeeding in periods of emergency and crisis.

Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- Help the Refugees, Legis and other NGOs distributed daily hygienic goods to babies consisting of: baby wipes (507 packages), diapers (1,680), and to women; pads (560 pcs).
- The Red Cross provided 205 hygienic parcels (for men, women and babies), 259 diapers, 20 baby parcels and 37,800 bottles of water.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The toilet/shower blog is currently under construction and will be finished soon.
- Disinfection of the rub halls and refugee housing units is necessary.

Communication and Information

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Free wifi will be installed in Vinojug reception centre.

NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR distributed 725 raincoats and 600 blankets.
- Nun, Legis and Help the Refugees distributed 2,090 raincoats, 300 pcs of baby clothing, 350 pcs of women's clothing and 700 pcs of men's clothing, 4,000 pairs of socks, 200 pairs of shoes, and a car trunk full of warm clothes, winter jackets, shoes and two baby strollers.
- Red Cross, Legis and other NGOs distributed 4,838 blankets.



Syrian siblings in a moment of high spirit at Vinojug. Photo UNHCR/A.Moller.

Working in partnership

Achievements and Impact

- The weekly coordination meeting in Gevgelija took place on Thursday 26 September.
- UNHCR met with the Minister of Interior and the Minister of Labor and Social Policy to advocate for a more transparent set-up for selling train tickets including a fixed ticket counter at the site and mitigating measures to prevent exploitation of refugees through illegal sellers.
- Partners working with the Ministries and municipalities to provide protection and assistance to refugees are: Help the Refugees in Macedonia, HERA, IOM, La Strada Open Gate, Legis, Kalliri, MYLA, Nun, Dorcas, Red Cross, SoS Children's Village, Caritas, Agape, People in need, International Relief-Samaritans Purs, JRS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO.
- Several delegations visited the Vinojug reception centre throughout the reporting period, amongst others the Japanese Ambassador and the British Government Agency MCA who were briefed by UNHCR, as well as the visit of the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Orlando Bloom. The delegations acknowledged the well-functioning of the centre and the impressive work done by all partners.
- UNHCR briefed the international community during the weekly OSCE meeting on the refugee response.