

FYR MACEDONIA

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

21 – 28 July 2015

KEY FIGURES

500

Dignity kits distributed

17,500

Food packages distributed

1,016

Medical interventions provided

2,500

People provided with legal counselling

PRIORITIES

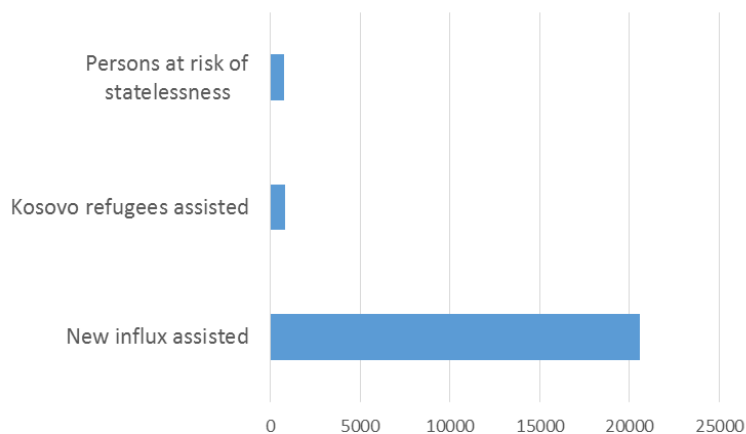
- Assist the Government and civil society in responding to the most urgent humanitarian and protection needs of the refugees
- Strengthen the asylum systems in the country in line with applicable international standards

HIGHLIGHTS

- Construction of the day-waiting area in Gevgelija has started; once the site is fully functional, several services will be located on site: medical assistance by the Red Cross; child-friendly activities by UNICEF and registration by the Ministry of Interior. The construction is funded by UNHCR.
- The Ministry of Transport has started operating additional trains in order to address overcrowded cars; previously 3 trains were operated on a daily basis.
- The Government shared its Operational Plan for responding to an increased influx of migrants with the UN agencies and the European Union Delegation.

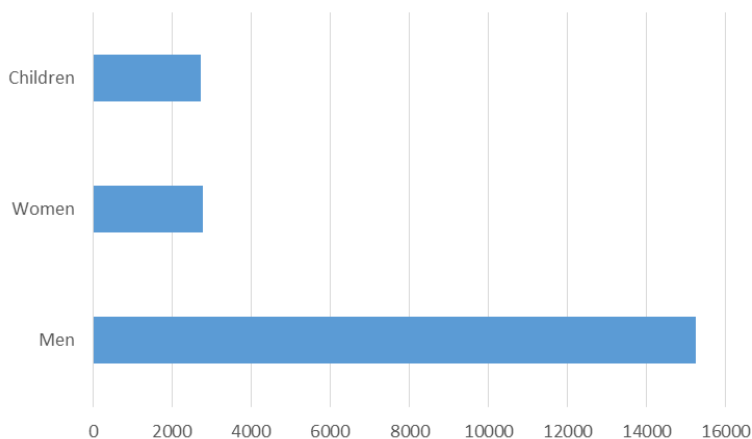
Population of concern

A total of **22,149** people of concern



Intention to apply for asylum (source: Ministry of Interior)

A total of **20,605** applications have been filed with the MoI from 19 June to 27 July 2015.



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

The current average arrival rate in Gevgelija is approximately 1,000 to 1,500 persons per day. The Ministry of Interior registered a total of 20,605 persons as of 27 July 2015. 74% of the arrivals are Syrians, 7% Afghans, 5% Iraqis, 3% Pakistanis and the remainder represent other nationalities such as Somalis, Palestinians, Congolese and Cameroonians. 41 applications for asylum were registered out of which 31 were submitted by Syrians.



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Achievements

Protection

Achievements and Impact

- UNICEF will be providing equipment and staff for a child-friendly space in the day-waiting area in Gevgelija.
- The Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) has two mobile teams at the train station in Gevgelija each day to assist with legal counselling and advice on the asylum procedure. This activity is funded by UNHCR, which will also provide additional budget to hire more staff, in particular interpreters.
- UNHCR's site planner is working closely with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the municipality in Gevgelija to assist in the planning of the day-waiting area. Discussions are ongoing to increase the reception capacity through an additional day-waiting area.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Systematic identification and referral of vulnerable cases, other than medical cases, require further improvement. IOM and UNHCR are working jointly with the Ministry of Interior to discuss options to speed up the registration process at Gevgelija train station while ensuring that protection-sensitive procedures are implemented. UNHCR is in discussion with the Ministry Labor and Social Policy to establish a legal protection desk at the registration point.



Health

Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period the Red Cross provided 1,016 medical interventions (out of which 644 were to children) at Gevgelija and Tabanovce. Four mobile teams of the Red Cross (two teams in each location) are working in two shifts to provide medical assistance and first aid. More severe cases are referred to the nearby hospital.
- The Ministry of Health provides voluntary vaccination at Gevgelija train station throughout the day.
- HERA, funded by UNFPA, is providing mobile gynecology healthcare assistance in coordination with the Red Cross.
- UNFPA distributed 500 dignity kits during the last weeks.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Two additional Red Cross mobile teams and an additional interpreter are required to cover the night shifts; UNHCR will provide the necessary funding for one additional team and the interpreters.

Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- The NGOs Nun and Legis are providing daily food packages to the refugees. During the reporting period 2,500 food packages per day have been distributed by volunteers working day and night shifts at Gevgelija and Tabanovce train stations.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Civil society and NGOs currently financed through private donations are closely coordinating to ensure that food packages can be purchased. UNHCR will assist in renting a local warehouse to facilitate storage of food items and avoid transport from Skopje, as currently done. Once the warehouse is operational, the NGOs will be purchasing the food locally.

Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- 10 toilets and 4 showers are currently being constructed in Gevgelija and 10 toilets are under construction in Tabanovce, funded by UNHCR.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- With an average of 1,000 arrivals passing through the train stations in Gevgelija and Tabanovce, the existing facilities are insufficient.

Communication and Information

Achievements and Impact

- Materials containing relevant information for refugees/migrants on different issues of interest have been produced by WHO, IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR, the Red Cross and MYLA. These information materials will be made available at the Gevgelija train station. The information materials will also be shared via partners' social media outlets.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR will be working with partners to strengthen the existing protection monitoring system using innovative approaches and modern technology. Analytical reports will be provided on a regular basis.

Working in partnership

- The refugee response activities are headed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Transport. Partners working with the Ministries and municipalities to provide protection and assistance to refugees are: Help the Migrants, Hera, IOM, La Strada Open Gate, Legis, MYLA, Nun, Red Cross, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO.
- Coordination is assumed at the national level by the Inter-Ministerial Working Group headed by the Ministry of Interior and chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. UNHCR attended the meeting on 7 July and has been asked to attend future meetings to ensure cooperation and coordination with the humanitarian partners on the refugee response. Coordination at the local level is assumed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in cooperation with UNHCR; the first local-level coordination meeting took place in Gevgelija on 30 July. The Municipality will provide a meeting room to facilitate the organization of the meetings.



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