

2015 KEY FIGURES

(AS AT END-NOVEMBER)

485,169

Registered intentions to seek asylum in 2015

31.2%

of registered intentions were expressed by minors in November

96%

of registered intentions were from refugee-producing countries in November

PRIORITIES

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

SERBIA

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1-7 December 2015

Highlights

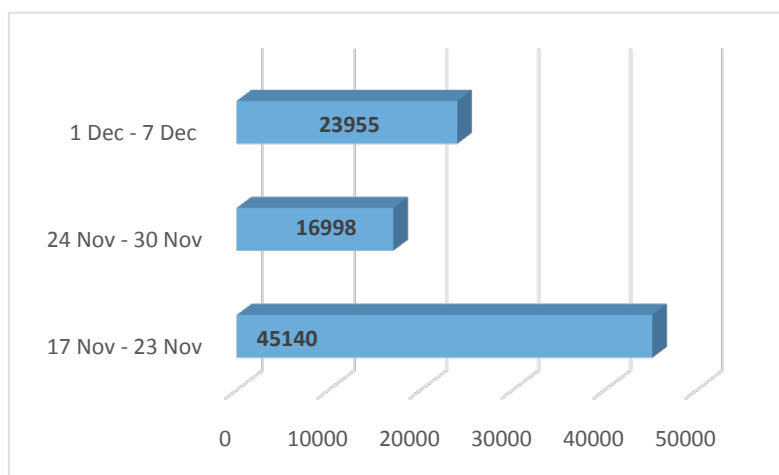
- The number of refugee arrivals averaged 3,200/day.
- Serbia's and FYR Macedonia's Ombudspersons Saša Janković and Idžet Memeti visited the Serbia-Macedonia border on 7 December and announced that they would request from their respective governments better reception conditions for refugees and migrants on both sides of the border, in hoping to bring about a bilateral agreement on a transport arrangement that would bypass the 4.5 km of mud road that refugees need to cross on foot in order to reach the refugee aid point (RAP) in Miratovac.
- With the peaks of arrivals from Bulgaria on 1 and 2 December (422 and 478 respectively), the participants of the Refugee Protection Working Group Meeting held in Belgrade on 3 December reiterated the need to form a Sub-Working Group on the Eastern/Bulgarian border.



Printing date: September 2015 Sources: UNCS, UNHCR
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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

23,955 registered their intention to seek asylum during the reporting period.



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

Serbia is situated along the preferred route through the Western Balkans for refugees originating from the Middle East and Asia, aiming to seek asylum in Europe. UNHCR estimated that at any given time some 5,000 refugees were on Serbian territory in the reporting period. The weather was very cold at night and cloudy during the day.

Arrivals from FYR Macedonia declined temporarily on 3 December to 553, due to the protests and blockages at the Greece-FYR Macedonia border. Refugees and migrants continued to arrive into Serbia from Bulgaria, with an average of 220 asylum-seekers arriving daily across the entire stretch of this border, in increasingly poor shape due to weather conditions. 70-175 asylum-seekers were observed resting in Belgrade at any one time.

The practice of denying entry to new arrivals originating from countries other than Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq continued throughout the region. Stranded asylum-seekers are at high risk to fall prey to smugglers and take illegal routes to the European Union instead. UNHCR and partners continued to advocate for protection-sensitive management of migration, and for the stranded asylum-seekers (around a dozen daily in total at entry and exit points) to be allowed access to asylum procedures. The SCRM continued to host them in the refugee aid points (RAP) and asylum centres, where they had access to humanitarian assistance.

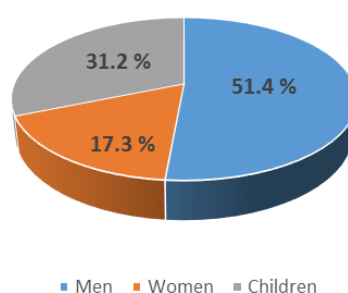
Increase of winterized waiting and shelter areas in Preševo and Šid areas continued at full speed, with 93% of available accommodation winterized thus far.

UNHCR, SCRM, Police, Public Medical Services, Red Cross, UNICEF, Caritas, CARE International, DRC, Natan and Remar assisted asylum seekers 24/7 at the Preševo RC. UNFPA was present during the day. Police, IOM and Medical Centre assisted 24/7 at the Miratovac RAP, and UNHCR, DRC, Philanthropy and MSF, for security reasons, only till 10 pm. Humedica provided medical services in Miratovac village from 7 am to 11 pm.

UNHCR, HCIT, WAHA, and SCRM were present 24/7 at the Šid train station.

UNHCR, SCRM, Red Cross, Public health medical team, EHO, APC, MSF, BCM, OM, INTERSOS, CARE and Czech Volunteers were assisting asylum seekers at Adaševci.

Breakdown by gender of registrations in November



Achievements



Protection

Achievements and Impact

- In Preševo and Šid, UNHCR, DRC, IOM and HCIT assisted around 1,000 PWSNs and reunited 11 families.
- IOM, DRC and UNHCR continued to transport up to 2,500 refugees and migrants daily from Miratovac to Preševo Reception Centre (RC).
- Following UNHCR training, the police began dividing families from single men in the pre-security area, and fast track persons with specific needs (PWSN) for registration, reducing the need for UNHCR interventions in this regard in Preševo RC.
- UNHCR continued conducting Participatory Assessments with asylum-seekers in Adaševci and Šid RAP, focusing on protection and shelter issues along the journey.
- UNICEF-supported child friendly spaces were operating in Preševo (managed by the Danish Refugee Council - DRC) and in the Adaševci RAP (managed by the World Vision). 694 children and 326 mothers benefited from these child-friendly spaces.
- Through the Safe Place for Children (SPC) at Belgrade Asylum Info Centre, SOS Children's Villages Serbia supported 537 adults and 87 children and provided 1,014 different services. At Adaševci and train station Šid, SOS mobile team was present and assisting refugees through information and referrals. SOS team also provided transportation services for a family placed in quarantine at the Grey House in Šid and information services in Adaševci RAP.
- SOS Children's Villages Serbia's IT spot in Adaševci (charger units and Wi-Fi internet) had between 500-1000 users per day.
- ADRA was involved in the following 24/7 protection-related activities in Preševo, Miratovac and Bujanovac: communication, translation (10 translators) and assistance to public officers, identification of hidden basic needs, medical assistance, monitoring of unaccompanied minors and other persons with special needs, referral to the protection mechanism and assisting UNICEF, social care institutions and other agencies.
- Save the Children (SC) 24/7 Safe space in Preševo, with 13 beds, 2 showers, a bathroom and a kitchenette assisted 161 adults and minors (121 children in total, including 12 babies and 7 UAMs). The following support has been provided: 36 overnight stay, 5 showers and 9 referrals to other services in community; 2 hygiene kits for babies and 17 to mothers, as well as 59 clothing items have been distributed. Additional 84 children (out of which 63 identified as potential UAM) and 15 parents has been reached and assisted with information and referral through Mobile Child Safety Team in Preševo.
- Through mobile and static Child Friendly Space in Belgrade, SC assisted 192 children (97 boys out of which 68 are potential UAM and 95 girls). Through mother and baby Corner at Asylum Info Centre, SC reached 58 mothers and 93



Preševo - REMAR staff entertaining the youngest, Photo©UNHCR

- babies (48 boys and 45 girls), delivering 56 hygiene kits for mothers and 86 for babies.
- Through Mobile Child Safety Unit, SC assisted 208 boys with information and referral at Dimitrovgrad RAP.
- INTERSOS provided Wi-Fi and charging services, as well as mobile phones for urgent cases at Adaševci RAP to up to 1000 beneficiaries per day.
- Balkan Center for Migration (BCM)/Catholic Relief Service (CRS) interpreters assisted over 2,000 refugees who arrived by train to Šid daily.
- People in Need (PIN) and Czech volunteers were providing information to refugees and supporting coordination among the different actors at Adaševci.

- The Asylum Info Centre in Belgrade, supported by ADRA, Klikaktiv, Savski Venac municipality and UNHCR, as well as Belgrade Center for Human Rights (BCHR) continued providing information, referrals, aid, and counselling and Internet access to refugees in Belgrade.
- SCRM continued to provide free shuttle service twice daily to the AC in Krnjača for refugees in the Belgrade region to shelter from the elements.
- Info park B92 provided information in English and Farsi at Dimitrovgrad RAP.
- UNHCR's partners Amity and Sigma Plus had mobile teams consisting of social workers and psychologists present in Negotin, Zaječar, Dimitrovgrad, Pirot and Knjaževac, who reported daily on the influx of refugees in these municipalities, their needs as well as the needs of the local communities and services provided. They had an Arabic-speaking team member in Zaječar and mobile teams used services of locally recruited translators.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- During the UNHCR participatory assessment interviews, asylum seekers complained about the challenging conditions of the strip of some 3-4 km road on the FYR Macedonia-Serbia border, making it very difficult to walk, particularly for children, women and elderly.
- A number of NGOs continued to face issues concerning access to RAPs.
- Groups of refugees continued to arrive to Serbia without any means left to continue their travel through Serbia and were approaching the authorities the UNHCR and the NGOs for assistance.

Education

Achievements and Impact

- In the Banja Koviljača, Krnjača, Bogovađa and Krnjača asylum centres, UNHCR funded DRC activities for children, including a kindergarten supervised by qualified care-givers, and English and Serbian language lessons three times per week to improve their chances of integration within the community.
- The Bogovađa asylum centre conducted sewing classes for women and mothers who are protégés of this centre. This activity boosted refugees' psychological well-being and self-confidence, and empowered them with transferable skills. Products include bed sheets used in other asylum centres and the One-Stop Centre in Preševo.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Notwithstanding the above-mentioned efforts, refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection continued to face challenges of integration and education opportunities.



Health

Achievements and Impact

- Weekly Medical Group Meeting was held in Adaševci on 1 December, with SCRM introducing two new doctors from the MoH, who will be supporting the organizations working at this RAP. A joint procedure for medical waste management was agreed amongst all medical service organizations working in Šid.
- WHO provided medical supplies for the RAP in Miratovac as well as medical supplies to 16 health centres in most affected locations, including Preševo, Dimitrovgrad and Šid.
- EHO medical team worked three times per week in shifts in the two newly renovated (by EHO), infirmaries at Adaševci motel.
- International Medical Corps/International Aid Network medical mobile unit provided medical and psychological first aid (PFA) at the train station in Šid.
- UNFPA distributed information/education/communication materials on reproductive health in crisis areas in cooperation with DRC, UNHCR and UNICEF. Leaflets on complications in pregnancy, antenatal and postnatal care

developed jointly with MoH, were made available in Serbian, English, Arabic, Farsi and Urdu in Preševo and Belgrade.

- UNFPA organized trainings for health care providers on gender-based violence (GBV) in Šid, Preševo and Vranje in the period 30 November-5 December. Training content was agreed with MoH as a condensed version of UNFPA Resource Package on Health Sector Response to GBV. UNFPA trainings were facilitated by local health centres and gathered approx. 100 providers dealing directly with refugees who learned how to recognize and respond to GBV in line with the MoH Special Protocol for Protection and Treatment of Women Victims of Violence. Trainings were attended by health centre employees, and health care providers engaged through World Vision and DRC.
- Caritas was providing medicaments and vitamins in the amount of 300 € per month, at the request of the Health Centre Dimitrovgrad.
- At the request of medical doctors operating at Preševo RC, Caritas provided medicaments and vitamins (including Adrenalin injections).
- The medical clinics supported by UNHCR continued to work 24/7 in Miratovac RAP and Preševo Centre. Medical team in Preševo had almost 500 interventions, and asylum-seekers also used the medical services of MSF/Humedica/Natan outside the RC gates.
- UNHCR continuously supplied medical teams in Preševo, Miratovac and Belgrade and asylum centre in Krnjača with medication and medical supplies.
- MSF provided medical assistance at their camper in Adaševci to up

to 300 refugees and migrants daily. BCM/CRS medical team and Šid Health Centre provided medical assistance from the main lobby of Adaševci Motel, and had over 100 interventions daily.

- WAHA provided medical care at Šid train station 24/7, supported by day by the Šid Health Centre team.
- UNHCR/DRC doctors continued their presence in Svetonikoljski park in Belgrade and provided medical assistance to refugees and migrants daily 07-19hrs.
- WAHA medical team in Dimitrovgrad had up to 80 interventions daily.



Adaševci - MSF team providing medical assistance to arriving refugees, Photo©UNHCR

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- Distribution of up to 600 UNHCR-funded food rations by the Red Cross continued daily at Preševo Centre. UNHCR and partners HCIT and DRC distributed 1,400 HEBs and 3,328 bottles of water in Šid and Preševo.
- UNICEF-supported mother-and-baby spaces, where lactating mothers can continue to breastfeed and receive necessary information on breastfeeding, were operational in Preševo (operates 24/7), and in Adaševci. Nurses have been deployed to support breastfeeding mothers and counsel them on infant feeding in Preševo and will be available by 15 December in Adaševci. Mothers can use these spaces to take care of their babies, access necessary hygiene items, and ensure their children above 6 months old receive age-appropriate food. During the reporting period, 357 babies and 123 mothers were supported.
- SOS Children's Villages Serbia distributed food/biscuits and NFIs (hygiene packs for babies and women, socks, underwear, clothes and toys) at Adaševci and Šid - 400 food and 840 NFIs.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) ensured provided one meal per day for the convicts who work at the motel in Adaševci. OM partnered with Remar in running a soup and tea kitchen in Adaševci 24/7.

- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide food parcels daily in Preševo, Adaševci and Belgrade, based on the needs. During this week Caritas provided more than 4,743 food parcels. Caritas was also providing hot tea and soup portions at the reception centre in Preševo, together with the local organization “Life Aid” from Vranje. During this week 3,700 portions of soup and 1,250 tea cups were distributed.
- In Šid, Save the Children distributed 1,750 culturally appropriate hot meals (250 daily through Merhamet - the Islamic Community of Serbia) as well as 300 cold food parcels and 830 clothing items through implementing partner Group 484.
- CARE distributed 1,685 food packages and 236 hygiene packages for children in Adaševci and 850 food packages in Preševo.
- Red Cross, World Vision, NSHC, ATINA and Czech volunteers were distributing food, hygiene kits and winter clothes inside all the buses at Adaševci RAP.
- Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) distributed food parcels at Adaševci RAP.
- World Vision provided up to 560 food parcels during the day, and Red Cross distributes food at night at Adaševci RAP.
- SOS Children’s Villages mobile team delivered 1,023 jars of baby food to Red Cross at Adaševci, and gave out 600 packs of biscuits, 120 hygiene packages for children, 50 hygiene packages for adults, 30 blankets for children and 340 pairs of socks for children.
- CARE distributed food and clothes to children at Adaševci.
- UNHCR and HCIT distributed 5,582 bottles of water and 9,300 WFP high-energy biscuits (HEBs) at Šid train station.
- UNHCR, DRC and partners distributed water and WFP HEBs in Preševo.
- Red Cross distributed food, water and clothes at all border towns with Bulgaria used by refugees for entry into Serbia.
- ADRA continued to provide, through local Red Cross, 1,000 food and hygiene packages daily, for refugees arriving from Bulgaria to Negotin.
- Philanthropy continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross in Šid to provide 200 - 250 food kits per day and in cooperation with Miksalište in Belgrade food items for 200 people per day.
- Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation provided 600 food packages for weekly distribution in Miksalište in Belgrade.
- In cooperation with Merhamet, the charitable organisation of the Islamic Community of Serbia, Save the Children distributed 1300 food parcels - 300 in Belgrade (at Miksalište and in the park next to the Faculty of Economics) and 1,000 at Adaševci.
- Red Cross and Miksalište distributed food and clothes/shoes to refugees in Belgrade.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- More water and HEBs were needed at entry points from Bulgaria.



Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- Construction work for 5 male and 5 female toilets and 5 male and 5 female showers in the Tobacco factory in Preševo RC was ongoing by DRC, Philanthropy and UNHCR.
- UNHCR received from the Preševo municipality satisfactory results regarding water testing results in the RC.
- UNICEF’s expert on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene was deployed to assess the situation in the RAPs and registration centres on 1 December for Preševo and Miratovac.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) were cleaning the motel/petrol station in Adaševci during the afternoon shift and were on garbage duty. They were also cleaning inside the motel, especially the old hotel kitchen.
- 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.
- Czech volunteers were cleaning the site at Adaševci.
- UNHCR was providing for the rental and cleaning services of mobile toilets at Miratovac RAP and Preševo RC.

- UNDP continued to rent a garbage truck on behalf of the Preševo municipality from Vranje PUC, which served to keep Miratovac and Preševo litter-free.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Latrines in Adaševci, Šid and Dimitrovgrad RAPs needed more regular cleaning.



Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- CARE replaced 500m² of floor with new waterproof, non-slip material in Adaševci motel.
- CARE distributed 715 units of NFIs i.e. 71 jackets, 233 pairs of socks, 246 gloves and 165 hats in Adaševci.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) were assisting MSF in setting up the tents (construction, electrical installation, insulation, painting etc.) at Šid Train station and Adaševci.
- MSF continued working on setting up and heating the Rub halls. UNHCR IP Vizija did a site survey for the planned fence and light extension, as well as electricity cabling at the Rub halls in Adaševci RAP.
- UNFPA distribution of dignity items in cooperation with DRC was ongoing in Preševo as per local needs.
- UNICEF, through its partners DRC and HCIT, distributed the following items in Preševo and Šid: 630 pairs of socks, 146 winter jackets, 934 sets of thermal underwear, 583 winter sets (scarves, gloves and hat), 110 blankets, 87 overall outerwear for babies, 63 baby changing mats, 2 raincoats, 7 baby carriers, 18 winter shoes/boots and 48 women's tights.
- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide hygiene packs for women and babies daily in Preševo, Belgrade, Bosilegrad and Adaševci. Caritas distributed 1,433 hygiene packs for women and 1,513 baby hygiene packages, along with 1,234 raincoats, 59 fleece jackets, 559 rain jackets, 89 winter hats, 2,260 pairs of socks and 668 winter shoes for both children and adults in Preševo, Adaševci, Belgrade, Bosilegrad and Zaječar.
- UNHCR distributed 7 wheelchairs in Preševo and Šid.
- APC and Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre (NSHC) distributed clothes at Adaševci.
- UNHCR and partners DRC and HCIT distributed 578 blankets, 761 jackets, 1,104 pairs of footwear, 122 hygiene gels, 575 bags and 828 pairs of socks in Preševo.
- Red Cross, Sigma Plus and Ana and Vlade Divac foundation distributed food, water and hygiene items in Dimitrovgrad.
- Asylum Info Centre in Belgrade distributed clothes and hygienic packages.



Šid - NSHC, funded by Care and Terre des Hommes, distributing food and winter jackets for women and children, Photo©UNHCR

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Hard shelter was lacking in Negotin and Zaječar and more blankets, shoes and warm clothes were needed all along the Serbia-Bulgaria border at crossings used by refugees and migrants arriving daily from Bulgaria.



Support to local communities

Achievements and Impact

- UNDP completed the assessment of waste management in Preševo, Šid, and partially Kanjiža and Dimitrovgrad - municipalities affected by the refugee influx.
- UNDP completed the assessment on water supply and sewage in Preševo and Šid. Rehabilitation of 2 water wells in Šid started, with a view to increasing the water yield in the system by 20%. The water pump in Preševo was replaced.
- UNDP provided equipment and winter uniforms for the Public Utility Companies (PUC) in Šid, Belgrade and Preševo.
- UNDP supported collection and management of waste in Preševo by engaging a garbage truck from PUC Vranje and employing additional workforce till end of January 2016. UNDP purchased 200 containers of 120l and 14 of 1.1m3 for Šid as well as 500 containers of 120l for Preševo.
- UNDP initiated research on community cohesion in the migration-affected municipalities.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Long-term response plans for waste management and planning of the local community support in Preševo and Šid are being developed by UNDP.



Preševo - Winterization of rub halls in progress,
Photo©UNHCR

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. 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), which meet on a fortnightly basis. RTG meeting took place on 4 December.
- Field coordination group meetings take place every second day in Preševo (chaired by UNHCR) and Šid (chaired by SCRM).
- **Refugee Protection Working Group (RPWG)**, co-chaired by the UNHCR and the MoL, currently makes for the key coordination mechanism for agencies/NGOs operational in the country, as well as a source of information for donors/diplomatic missions who also attend its meetings largely as observers. RPWG has over 150 members, and is constantly growing. 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). The RPWG met on 3 December in Belgrade.
- A **Partners' Briefing** where the UNHCR, UNRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & MoL/Chair of Government WG on Mixed Migration update the diplomatic corps/donors and NGOs on the current refugee situation and the response of the UN agencies in the previous period, took place on 9 November. Partners Briefing takes place every first week of the month.
- The **Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO)** hosts **Donor Coordination Meetings** every first week of the month. The last Donor Coordination Meeting took place on 9 November in Belgrade.

Contacts:

Ms. Ivana Žujović-Simić, Principal Secretary, E-mail: zujovic@unhcr.org, Tel: +381 (0) 11 3082 102
 Ms. Vera Dragović, Information Management, E-mail: dragovic@unhcr.org, Tel: +381 (0) 11 3082 105

Links:

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