

KEY FIGURES

11,128

Medical interventions provided

819

Medical assistance to children

18,175

Unaccompanied children registered

18,911

Food packages & food parcels

9,036

Hot soups distributed

4,527

Winter and rain jackets distributed

PRIORITIES

- Assist the Government and civil society in responding to the most urgent humanitarian and

FYR MACEDONIA

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1-7 January 2016

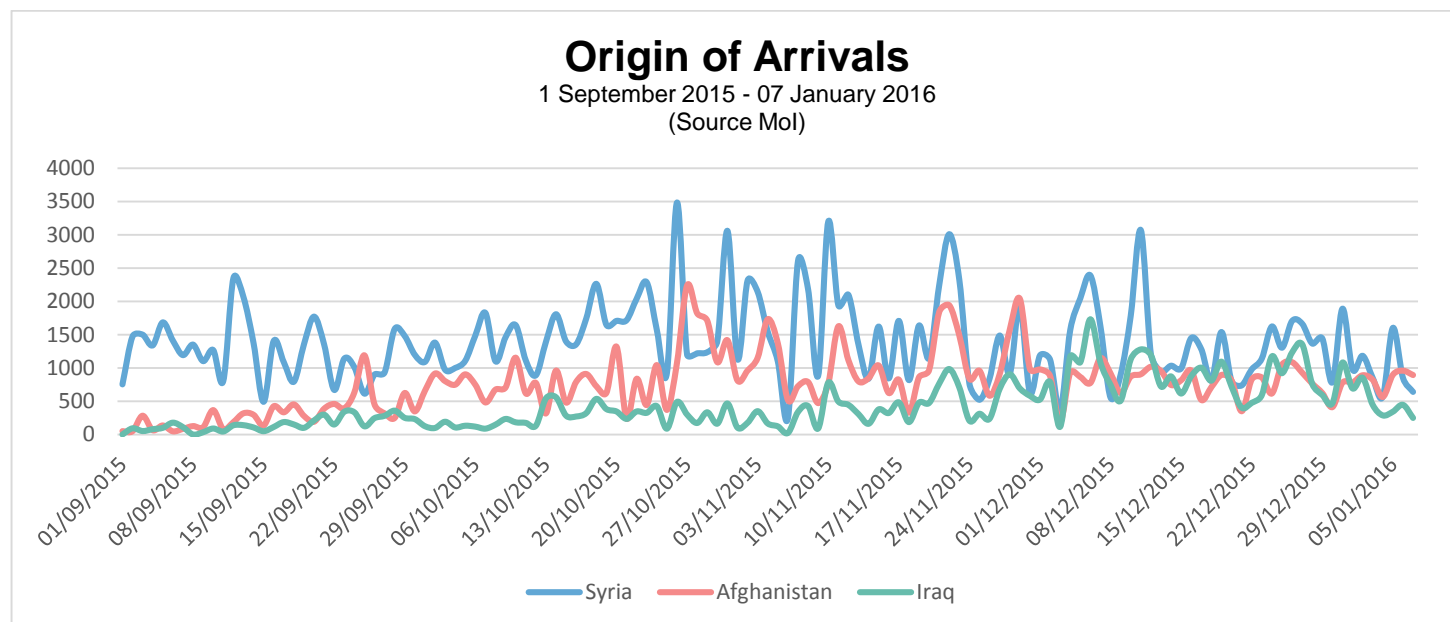
HIGHLIGHTS

- 15,775 refugees and migrants crossed the border into FYR Macedonia during 1-7 January 2016, with a daily average of 2,254. Since UNHCR began monitoring departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 some **703,055** refugees and migrants have departed.
- From 1-7 January 2016, out of the intentions to seek asylum 23 applications for asylum were filed, while from 1 January 2015 to 7 January 2016, 1,909 asylum applications were submitted out of which 997 were submitted by Syrians, 362 by Afghans, and 172 by Iraqis. So far only two persons have been recognised as refugees in 2015-2016, both unaccompanied children, one from Iraq and one from Syria.
- During the reporting period, 152 people were returned from Vinojug transit centre, on the southern border of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the Greek border for possessing forged documents, no documents, or for being nationals of countries other than Syria, Afghanistan or Iraq.
- On 1 January, the Croatian police introduced a limit of 940 persons per train departing from Sid. The authorities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have been informed accordingly and expect soon to be requested to issue each refugee with an individual registration form, and to share the complete list of people transiting to Serbia with the Serbian Border Police in advance. Logistical arrangements and additional resources are required to implement this new practice in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- Hungarian police visited the Vinojug reception centre on 5 January and started assisting the FYR Macedonia police from 6 January.

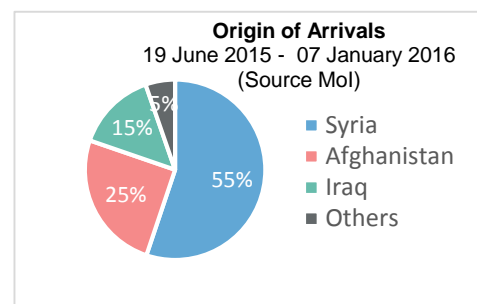
UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

15,775 refugees and migrants crossed the border into FYR Macedonia during the reporting period 1-7 January 2016, with a daily average of 2,254. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 some 703,055 refugees and migrants have departed.



The Ministry of Interior's statistics of refugees and migrants declaring their intention to apply for asylum reached 404,041 including 119,333 (30%) children, of whom 18,175 (15% of children) were registered as unaccompanied since 19 June until 7 January 2016. Of these 222,842 (55%) of the arrivals are Syrians, 101,497 (25%) Afghans, 58,261 (14%) Iraqis, and the remaining (6%) represent other nationalities such as Iranians, Palestinians, Pakistanis, Somalis, Congolese and Bangladeshi.



Achievements



Protection

Achievements and Impact

- The national authorities continued to transfer persons held in the detention-like reception centre for foreigners in Gazi Baba (Skopje) to the reception centre for asylum-seekers in Vizbegovo (Skopje), who were held in relation to smuggling incidents. Their asylum applications were registered after they provided statements against their smugglers in criminal court. According to the information provided by the persons themselves, they are mainly from Afghanistan, Iran, Morocco, and Pakistan. There are currently 80 persons accommodated in the Gazi Baba centre, and the maximum length of stay there is 38 days. UNHCR continued to monitor the situation related to persons held in Gazi Baba by conducting regular visits with the support of its legal partner, the Macedonia Young Lawyers Association, and provided relevant information on the asylum procedure in the country and legal assistance to those interested in applying.

- From 1-7 January approximately 1959 children and 1638 women were provided with support, including emotional and psychosocial assistance, in the UNICEF Child Friendly Space operated by the NGO La Strada in Vinojug. La Strada identified and assisted 167 vulnerable individuals. In Tabanovce La Strada assisted and supported approximately 1922 children and 1943 women. The activities are funded by UNICEF, UNHCR, GIZ, Save the Children and Terre des Hommes.
- From 1-7 January approximately 957 children and 463 women were provided with support, including emotional and psychosocial assistance in the Child Friendly Space operated by the SOS Children's Village in Tabanovce. Additionally, 32 vulnerable individuals were identified and assisted. The activities are funded by the SOS Kinderdorf International and UNICEF.
- During the reporting period 337 refugee group leaders, around 17,386 refugees were given information about their rights and obligations in FYR Macedonia at the Vinojug reception site by MYLA, who also assisted ten asylum-seekers at the Vizbegovo Reception Centre with their asylum procedure. MYLA also ensured prioritisation in 83 cases, around 133 vulnerable individuals for their registration in Vinojug. MYLA's data entry clerks assisted the Border Police in issuing 15,780 intentions for asylum during the reporting period.
- From 1-7 January and in close coordination with UNHCR, Red Cross, and La Strada staff in Tabanovce, 44 Extremely Vulnerable Individuals and 107 members of their family/group were transported by MercyCorps from the Tabanovce transit centre to the borderline with Serbia, and referred to the MSF team to be picked up at the border and to the MC team at the Miratovac RAP.
- During the reporting period 11 separated families were reunited through the Cross Border Info Group on whatsapp, in cooperation with organisations present in the sites in Tabanovce, Miratovac Rap, Miratovac bus point, Presevo PC, and Presevo Train Station, and four lost papers were found and returned to refugees at different points.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The Border Police did not check on the registration status of refugees, who, upon arriving at the Tabanovce transit centre, claimed to have not been issued registration documents or to have lost them after being registered in the Vinojug registration centre. The police explained that they are still missing the necessary equipment, such as scanners, to adequately complete this task.
- Despite tighter border controls and additional measures of checking documents, a few individuals from countries other than Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq continue to arrive on foot to Tabanovce through the green border, and many of whom have been abused by smugglers and gang members.
- Throughout the reporting period UNHCR staff and NGOs reported that religious promotional materials were found in and around the Vinojug site, and were distributed to refugees. Camp management representatives were informed in order to take action with those who are responsible.
- Some tensions were reported between refugee groups in the site in Tabanovce. The police intervened to control the crowd.
- The Tabanovce site is not always adequately guarded when there is a changing of shifts in Kumanovo resulting in unauthorized people entering the site, including unregulated vendors. During the reporting period, a woman was seen taking photographs of the site. The police warned her that she was not allowed to be there, but she was still seen on the grounds later. Police will be posted at the entrance of the transit centre soon in order to better monitor access to the site.



Health

Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period the Red Cross provided 11,128 medical interventions out of which 128 were pregnant women and 819 were children. The Red Cross is working in shifts to provide medical assistance and first aid in Gevgelija and Tabanovce 24/7. This activity is funded by UNHCR and the Red Cross.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

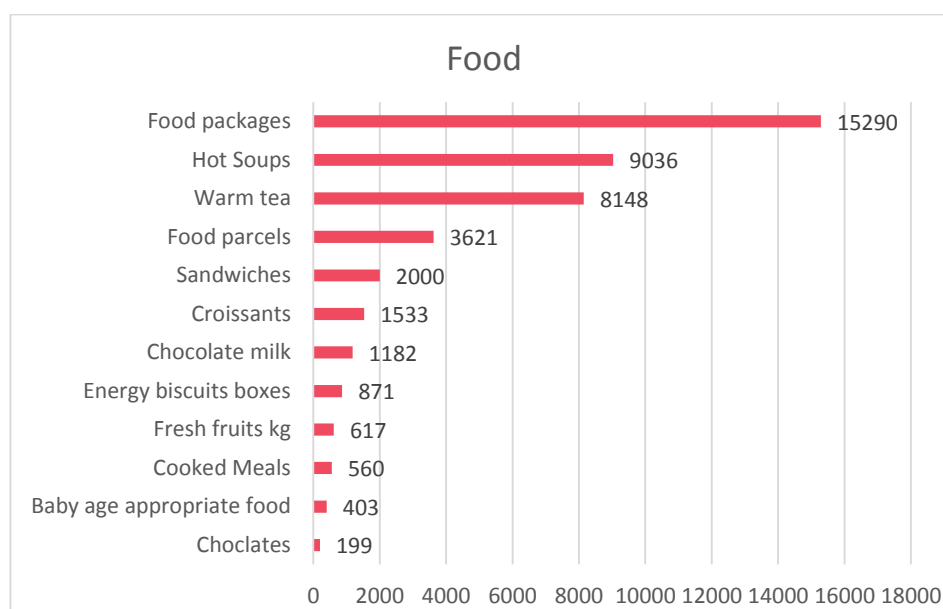
- The Red Cross notified UNHCR that it has been more difficult to access treatment for refugees outside of the site during the reporting period. UNHCR is monitoring to see if this becomes a trend.



Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- Legis, Nun, Kalliri, Agape, Dorcas, La Strada, Help the Refugee in Macedonia, Caritas, UNHCR and Red Cross distributed:



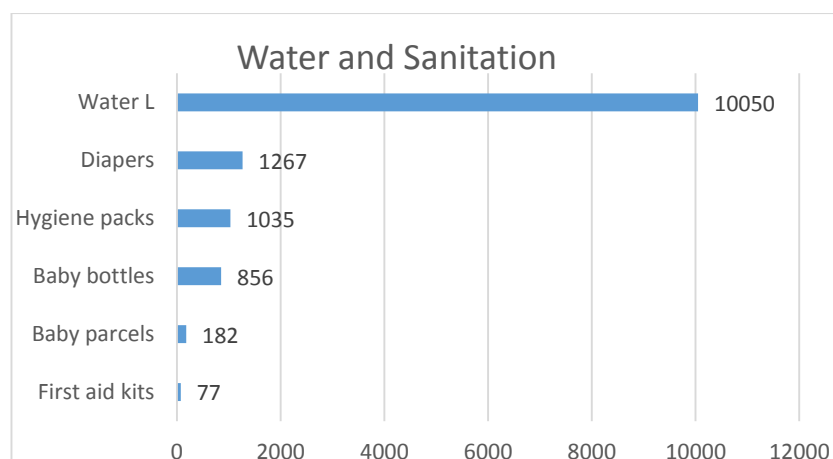
- The baby food that is distributed in the child friendly spaces in Gevgelija and Tabanovce is funded by UNICEF.
- In Tabanovce, equipment for the kitchen for hot meals is in place, and it will be operational as soon the insulation is completed.



Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- Red Cross, Help the Refugees in Macedonia, La Strada and other NGOs distributed :



- The hygiene items that are distributed in the child friendly space in Tabanovce are funded by UNICEF.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Water was not available at Tabanovce rest area and the restrooms as a number of the fixtures, taps and flushes were broken, and pipes froze on account of the cold weather. The Crisis Management Centre started repair work on the faucets and the toilet block area.
- In Vinojug, one of the Rubb halls and the area leading to “Stone 59” were covered in litter. The cleaning team that is responsible for keeping it tidy was not on duty on 7 January.



Communication and Information

Achievements and Impact

- Information continued to be shared through the Mercy Corps Cross Border Info Group between organisations’ staff active in Gevgelija, Tabanovce, Miratovac, Presevo and Sid about the current situation and the flow of people in all sites. It lead to better coordination between sites, resulting in real time information and fast reuniting of 11 separated families during the reporting period.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The WiFi connection was very weak for the last ten days in Vinojug, with total lack of connectivity in some areas. NGO, Telecoms Sans Frontieres installed new equipment on 6 January making it functional again.



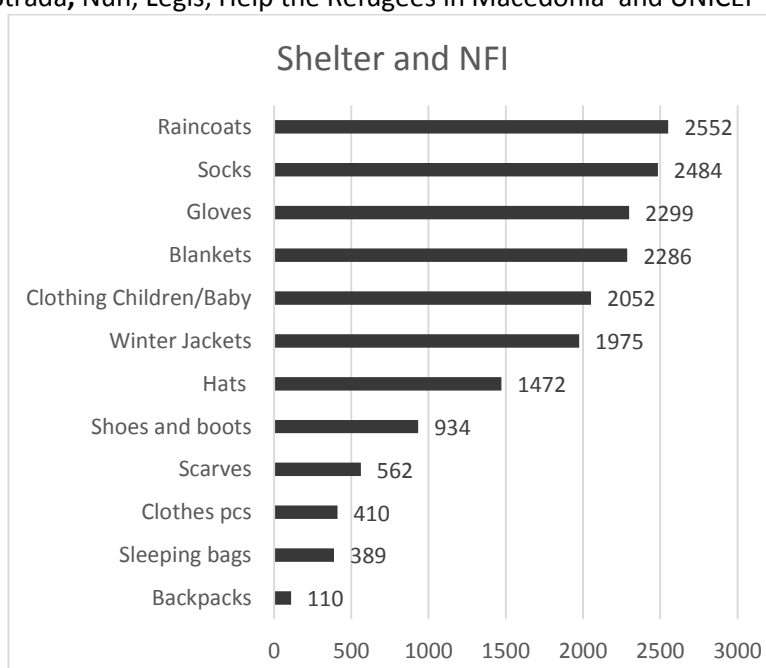
Providing information to refugees in cooperation with UNHCR partners is crucial. ©UNHCR/L.Brashnarska, Vinojug (fYR Macedonia) December 2015



Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR, Red Cross, La Strada, Nun, Legis, Help the Refugees in Macedonia and UNICEF distributed:



Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Some challenges in reception conditions were reported due to the very cold weather. There were a few power outages in both the Gevgelija and Tabanovce reception sites. While heating was provided by gas heaters, this remained limited in some of the rubb halls during the first part of the week. Electrical issues were resolved with heating being available in both sites thereafter.
- In Vinojug, a number of plugs and sockets in the Rubb halls near the train station were producing too much heat. Also, ten out of the 21 electrical sockets were not functioning. UNHCR reported the issue to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy to fix the problems. MLSP informed that they will take action on 8 January.
- In Tabanovce, reparation of the RHUs still need to be finalized and locks need to be placed on the doors as the CMC has concerns that the heaters and lights could be stolen.



Due to the very cold weather and problems with electricity, UNHCR has stepped up the distribution of blankets, winter jackets and winter footwear to all persons in need, but especially to the vulnerable categories ©UNHCR/L.Brashnarska, Vinojug (fYR Macedonia) December 2015

Working in partnership

Achievements and Impact

The weekly coordination meeting in Gevgelija on 04 January 2016 while no meeting happened in Tabanovce during the reporting period.

Partners working with the Ministries and municipalities to provide protection and assistance to refugees are: Agape, ASB, Caritas, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Macedonia, Danish Caritas, DRC, Dorcas, Euro Human, GIZ, Grain of Goodness, Habitat for Humanity, Help the Refugees in Macedonia, HERA, IOM, JRS, Kalliri, La Strada Open Gate, Legis, MCMS (Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation), Mercy Corps, Merhamet, MYLA, Nun, Operation Mercy, People in need, Red Cross, Samaritan's Purse, SOS Children's Village, Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF), Terre des hommes, Vlaznia Kumanovo, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO.

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