



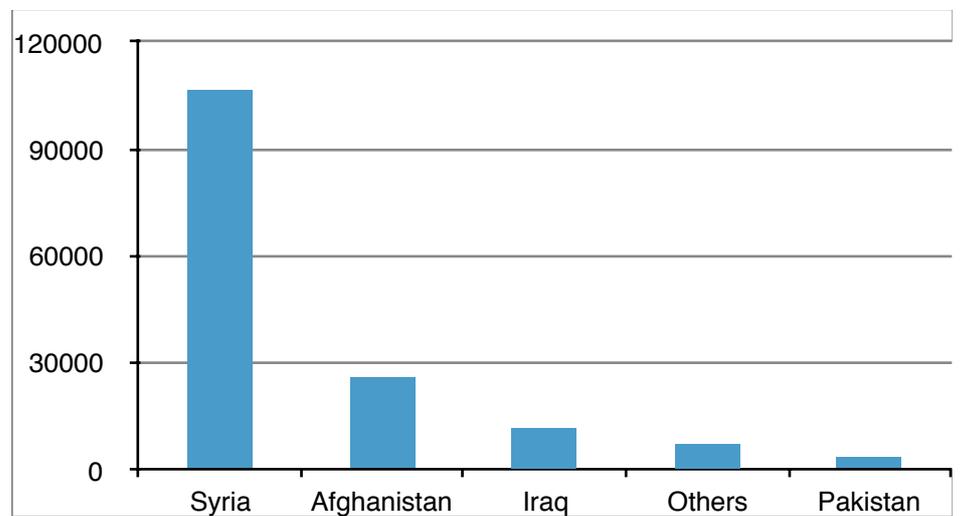
## FYR MACEDONIA

### INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

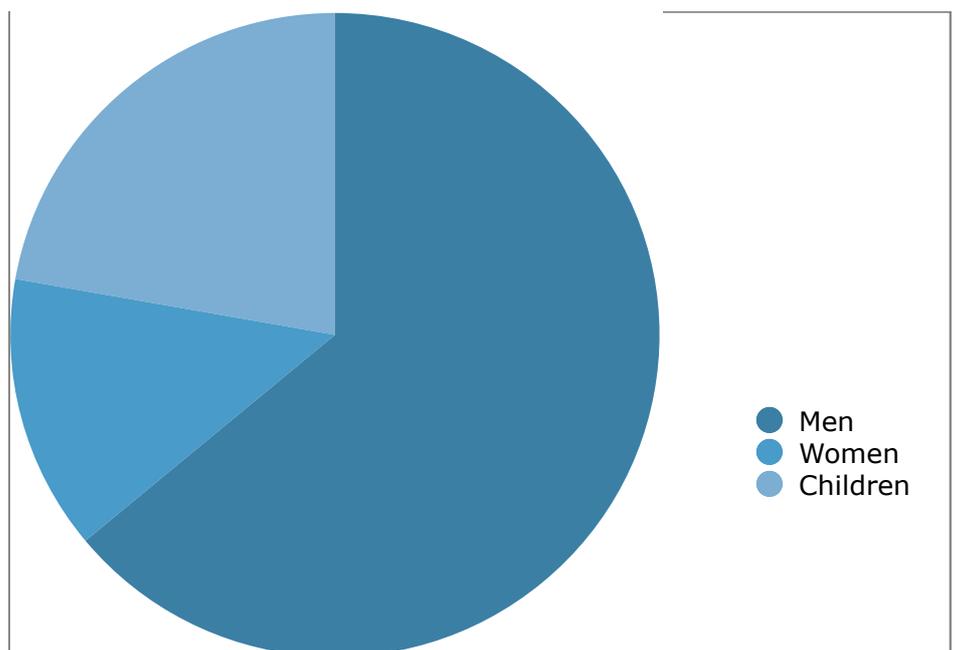
14 - 20 October 2015

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 40,603 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into FYR Macedonia during the reporting period 14 - 20 October with a daily average of 5,800. On 18 October the number peaked with 10,005 refugees and migrants; an all-time high. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 more than 365,654 refugees and migrants have departed.



Intention to apply for asylum: **155,739** applications have been filed from 19 June to 20 October 2015 (source: Ministry of Interior).



### KEY FIGURES

**24,432**

Medical interventions provided

**2,253**

Medical assistance to children

**6,389**

Unaccompanied minors registered

**27,334**

Food packages & sandwiches distributed

**1,052**

Blankets distributed

### 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

# UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

## Operational Context

40,603 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into fyR Macedonia during the reporting period 14 - 20 October with a daily average of 5,800. On 18 October the number peaked with 10,005 refugees and migrants; an all-time high. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 more than 365,654 refugees and migrants have departed.

The Ministry of Interior's statistics of refugees and migrants declaring their intention to apply for asylum reached 155,739 including 34,607 children, of whom 6,389 are unaccompanied since 19 June until 20 October 2015. Of these 106,915 (69%) of the arrivals are Syrians, 25,818 (17%) Afghans, 11,697 (8%) Iraqis, 3,729 (2%) Pakistanis and the remainder represent other nationalities such as Palestinians, Iranians, Somalis, Congolese and Bangladeshi. 70 applications for asylum were registered out of which 51 were submitted by Syrians in the same period while from January to end of September 1,710 asylum applications were submitted.



*Mother carrying her tired daughter inside Vinograd. Photo UNHCR/A.Moller*

## Achievements

### Protection

#### Achievements and Impact

- On 15 October 2015, the draft text of the proposed Standard Operating Procedures for processing unaccompanied and separated children was adopted by the National Commission for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons and Illegal Migration. The SOPs provide a framework for institutions and organizations, governmental and non-governmental as well as the international organizations to act in accordance with their competences and mandates.
- The coordination and collaboration among the Border Police, Special Forces, UNHCR and others has improved. This can, in part, be explained by the last weeks extensive protection training conducted by UNHCR for the Police, Army and Special Forces on refugee protection within mixed migration flows.
- UNHCR has developed guidelines for Accountability to Affected Populations that provides an overview of the different activities and mechanisms UNHCR and partners have put in place at Gevgelija transit center. It is important to ensure that refugees are informed, can voice their concerns, and are able to influence which type of assistance is the most adequate for them.
- During the reporting period approximately 2,346 women and 3,643 children were provided with emotional and psychosocial assistance in the UNICEF Child Friendly Spaces operated by the NGO La Strada. La Strada identified and assisted 805 vulnerable individuals. The activities are funded by UNICEF, UNHCR, GIZ and People in Need.

- During the reporting period approximately 11,000 persons were offered free legal advice at the Vinojug station by MYLA, who also assisted 8 asylum seekers at the Vizbegovo Reception Center with their asylum procedure. MYLA also ensured prioritization for 150 vulnerable individuals for their registration. The MYLA activities are funded by UNHCR.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The overcrowding of trains remain of serious concern to UNHCR. The train price is still higher for refugees than locals and an official statement or price scheme is not provided yet. UNICEF is concerned about children continuing to be charged on an arbitrary basis as a result of this and abuse by railway staff continues to be observed. UNHCR and UNICEF continue to advocate to address these shortcomings at the highest levels.
- The Director of the Macedonian Railway Office had a meeting with UNHCR. An official price list will be issued and published at Vinojug site. Railway personnel will be present permanently to sell tickets before the arrival of trains.

## Health

### Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period the Red Cross provided 24,432 medical interventions out of which 64 were pregnant women and 2,253 were children. 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.
- The Ministry of Health in collaboration with public health institutions provide medical care of patients at Vinojug site in Gevgelija. There is an increase in respiratory infections as a result of wet and cold weather.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Cleaning in and around the Vinojug reception centre is still unsatisfactory although there has been improvements. UNHCR and partners continuously work with the cleaners to improve the situation.

## Food Security and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- Legis, Nun, Kaliri, Agape and Dorcas distributed 18,334 food packages and 5,000 sandwiches in Vinojug during the reporting period. Legis also distributed 100 kg fruits and 50 packages of biscuits. UNHCR distributed 73 high energy biscuits.
- Red Cross distributed 895 food parcels (family packages) and 198 packages of biscuits.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- In Tabanovce there is a need for a food distribution schedule and standard operations procedures.

## Water and Sanitation

### Achievements and Impact

- Help the Refugees in Macedonia, Legis and other NGOs distributed daily hygiene items to babies consisting of: baby wipes (150 packages), diapers (200), and to women; pads (250 pcs).
- The Red Cross distributed 645 hygienic parcels (for men, women and babies), 553 diapers, 60 baby parcels and 22474 bottles of water.
- The toilet and shower blog in Vinojug is now in use. Cleaning and maintenance are being improved to ensure that the facilities are hygienic appropriate.

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNICEF has started building an additional sanitation block for small children and a block for persons with disabilities.

## Communication and Information

### Achievements and Impact

- The UNHCR content media team from Geneva was on mission to shoot videos and photo materials of UNHCR's activities and the human stories behind the crisis. The first videos are available here: [UNHCR Youtube](#)
- UNICEF is distributing information on the benefits of breastfeeding in emergencies.



*Refugees waiting for the train. Photo UNHCR/A.Moller*

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The installation of free wifi connection is still awaiting permission from the relevant authorities.

## NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR has distributed 498 blankets, 74 sleeping bags and 47 rain coats during the reporting period. Nun, Legis and Help the Refugees in Macedonia distributed 2,000 raincoats, 200 pcs of baby clothing, 250 pcs of women's clothing and 300 pcs of men's clothing, 1,500 pairs of socks, 120 pairs of shoes.
- Red Cross distributed 2,276 blankets and 78 sleeping bags.
- Samaritan's Purse and Dorcas distributed 1,875 backpacks.
- UNICEF distributed 20 heating devices that are used throughout the site.

## Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Procurement of winter clothing by UNHCR, UNICEF and Red Cross is ongoing while local associations are currently providing second hand clothing to refugees. Especially rain coats and shoes are in high demand and often not available in relevant sizes.
- UNICEF has 20 larger space heating devices are in the pipeline.

## Working in partnership

### Achievements and Impact

- The weekly coordination meeting in Gevgelija took place on Thursday 15 October.
- The Crisis Management Team focal point has initiated coordination meetings for actors operational at the exit point in Tabanovce. They will now take place on a weekly basis.
- 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, Operation Mercy, Red Cross, SoS Children's Village, Caritas, Agape, People in need, International Relief-Samaritan's Purse, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Macedonia, Hilal, JRS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO.
- UNHCR briefed the donor community as part of the monthly donor briefing called by the Resident Coordinator. The participants were briefed on the progress for the implementation of the winterization plan.