

2016 KEY FIGURES

(AS AT END-JANUARY)

58,464

Transit registration papers issued

456

Registered intentions to seek asylum in Serbia

35.7%

of registered refugees and migrants were minors

11

Applications for asylum

0

Persons granted refugee status

3

Persons granted subsidiary protection

PRIORITIES

- Ensure that urgent humanitarian and protection needs of refugees are being met.
- Assist the Government to strengthen the asylum system in line with applicable international standards

SERBIA

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

1-14 February 2016

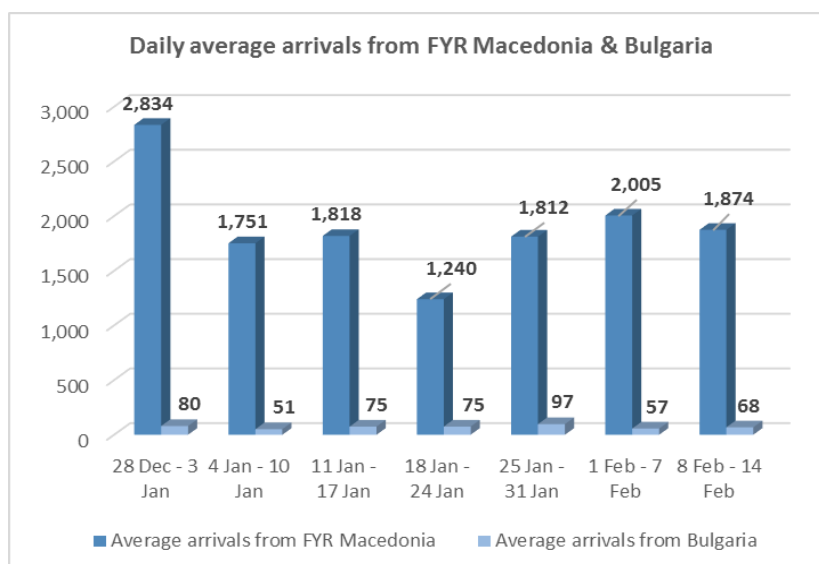
Highlights

- The weather remained relatively warm for this time of the year, still, the three days of heavy rain towards the end of the reporting period made the crossing of the green border between FYR Macedonia and Serbia, across muddy terrain, fairly difficult for the refugees.
- Discriminatory screening and denial of entry and exit to nationalities other than Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan continued, and only asylum seekers with proper travel documents/Photo IDs, in addition to registration papers, were allowed to enter the Republic of Croatia.
- The number of average daily refugee arrivals remained low and manageable at under 2,000 per day. 28,032 refugees arrived in total in the first two weeks of February.



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

196 refugees and migrants registered their intention to seek asylum during the reporting period.



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

As of 15 February, due to an again increased number of refugees and migrants in Belgrade, the Asylum Info Center extended its opening and working hours to 24/7.

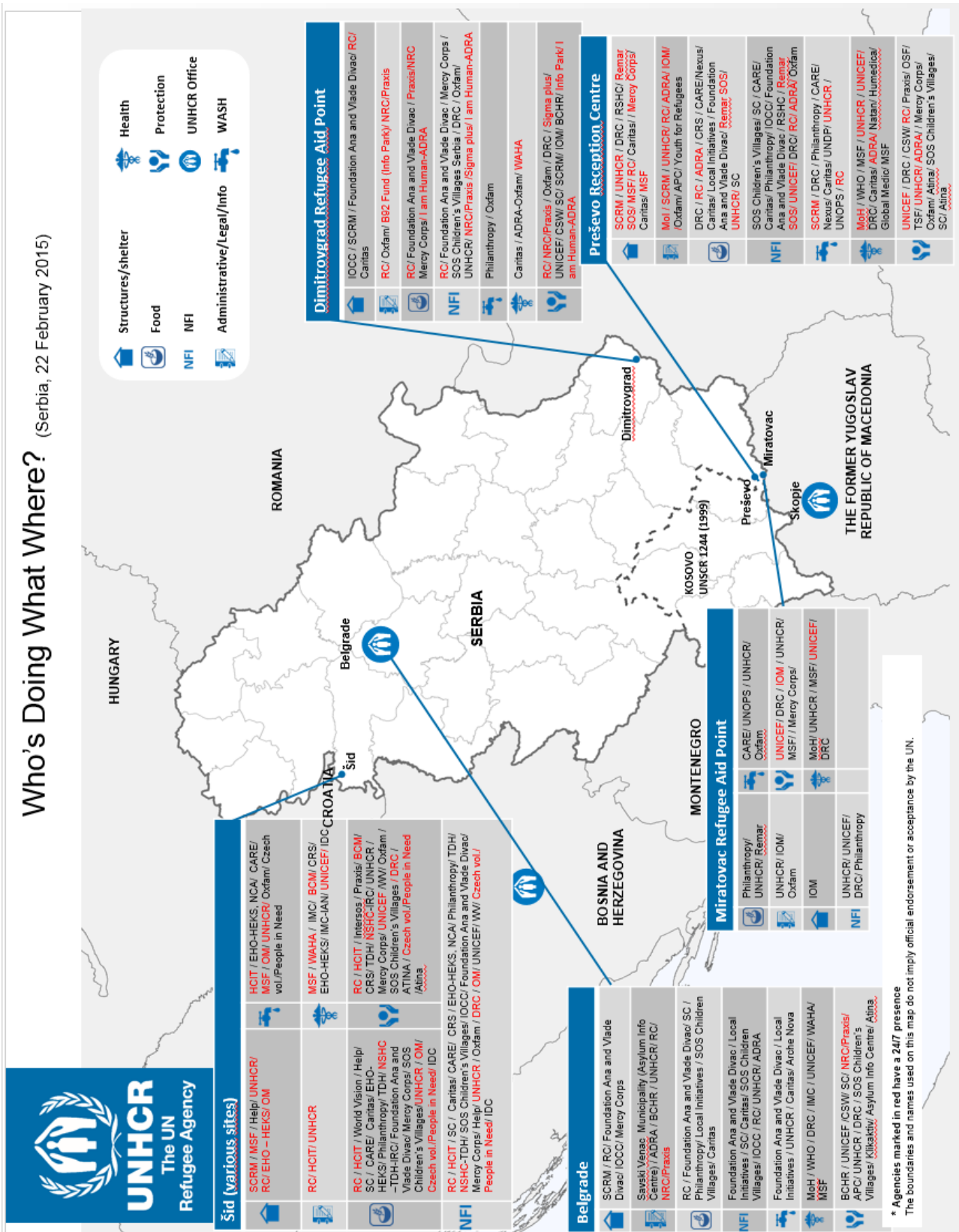
The UK, Germany, Kuwait, Norway, and the United Nations co-hosted the conference in London on 4 February 2016 to raise significant new funding to meet the immediate and longer-term needs of those affected by the war in Syria. The conference raised over US\$ 11 billion in pledges – \$5.8 billion for 2016 and a further \$5.4 billion for 2017-20 to enable partners to plan ahead. Serbia pledged 500,000 EUR for assistance to the children of Syria through UNICEF. On this occasion, Serbia's Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić met with UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi, and they agreed on the necessity for a common European solution to the refugee crisis.



Serbia's Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić and UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi at „Support Syria and the Region” Conference in London,
Photo@Pink International Media

Who's Doing What Where?

(Serbia, 22 February 2015)



Achievements



Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR's implementing partner HCIT maintained a 24/7 presence at the Šid train station and Šid refugee aid point (RAP) and provided legal aid and protection information (1,300 asylum-seekers), fast tracking (59 PWSNs) and referrals (221 referrals to medical staff of WAHA and Šid doctors), assistance to Serbian Police in crowd control and assistance to Croatian Police with interpretation during short interviews conducted while checking the paperwork of asylum-seekers. HCIT conducted detailed interviews with 32 asylum-seekers and assisted in 4 cases of family reunification. One PWSN received a wheelchair and one was referred to Šid Health Centre with HCIT interpreter assisting with examination at the Hospital. HCIT interpreters assisted in over 2,500 cases. 921 asylum-seekers who were refused entry on board of trains headed to Croatia were counseled by UNHCR and HCIT about the asylum procedure in RS. HCIT engaged Centre for Social Welfare (CSW) in at least 15 cases when UASCs were identified in Šid.
- UNHCR buses continued to transport up to 2,300 refugees and migrants daily from Miratovac to Preševo Reception Centre (RC). UNHCR/DRC, IOM, Mercy Corps, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and MSF vans transported up to a dozen PWSNs and their family members from the border with FYR Macedonia to Preševo RC each day.
- Mercy Corps (MC) transported persons with special needs (PSNs) from Miratovac RAP/FYR Macedonia border line to Preševo RC (3,040 in the first two weeks of February).
- IOM mobile team deployed to support Border police in Miratovac and assisted approx. 27,300 refugees and migrants upon arrival by providing necessary information and referral towards the registration centre (RC) in Preševo. IOM assisted vulnerable families and individuals with transportation from Miratovac to Preševo (approx. 7,500 persons assisted, of which approx. 2,900 children).
- In Preševo RC, IOM mobile team engaged in assisting the work of the police in preparatory activities for registration of refugees and migrants (filling in the questionnaires prior to registration) and assisted asylum-seekers in filling in 24,000 questionnaires.
- IOM placed their new container at Šid Train Station, expanded their team and established a 24hr presence in Šid.
- NRC-Praxis continued implementing 24/7 activities related to provision of information and referrals to refugees in Belgrade (615 cases were provided with information and/or escorted to Savska police station for registration or Krnjača AC for accommodation) and Dimitrovgrad (822 refugees provided with information, assistance and referrals). When it came to refugees stranded in Belgrade, NRC-Praxis informed them of the possibility of seeking asylum in Serbia or returning to the country of origin.
- UNICEF supported the Centre for Social Work to deploy three social workers to the Asylum Info Centre in Belgrade, in order to respond to the increased number of unaccompanied and separated children (UASCs).
- UNICEF, in collaboration with the Child Protection Hub/Terres des Hommes, organised a two-day Training of Trainer session on Child Protection in Emergencies on 1-2 February, with 16 participants from the NGO sector and the national child protection system, to support capacity building initiatives on child protection in emergencies over the coming months.



Šid - UNICEF/Word Vision child friendly space was open 24/7,
Photo@UNHCR

- UNICEF-supported child friendly spaces (CFSs), where children can access recreational and psychosocial services, continued to be operational in Preševo and Miratovac (in partnership with Danish Refugee Council - DRC) and in Adaševci and Šid (in partnership with World Vision and SOS Children's Villages – SOS CV). 5,569 children and 2,195 mothers and caregivers were assisted through services provided in these four CFSs.
- CFS Adaševci provided support to 693 children and 395 mothers/families. 244 hygiene packages were distributed in this CFS by SOS CV. CFS operated 12 hours per day and assistance for mothers with babies was available 24/7. Mother and Baby corner (MBC) provided support to 1,774 children and 659 mothers. In the MBC, there were 80 breastfeeding mothers and 273 milk portions were distributed.
- CFS in Šid supported 309 children and 281 families and SOS CV and started with distributions of hygiene packages to mothers and children.
- SOS CV mobile team in Preševo organized outreach activities for the CFS, implemented by DRC, and distribution of food and non -food items. 471 children and 256 mothers were referred to CFS by SOS CV outreach team.
- SOS CV IT spots in Adaševci, Šid and Preševo (charger units and Wi-Fi internet) had 21,500 Wi-Fi connections during the reporting period and charging stations provided electricity to around 16,000 users. In cooperation with Mercy Corps (MC), refugees were referred to the www.refugeeinfo.eu web page where information was shared in 4 languages on their present location, the registration process, legal rights, transportation, accommodation, shelters, medical aid and other services available at the RAP.
- On 5 February, SOS CV opened an ICT corner in Preševo RC, which includes 4 computers with access to internet and electricity for phone chargers. During the reporting period 178 refugees availed of the ICT corner.
- Caritas was providing counselling services to refugees and migrants in Belgrade, including at Krnjača, through a team made out of a psychologist, a social worker and an Arabic translator.
- Caritas funded the production of notice boards in Arabic and English for the RC Preševo.
- At Adaševci RAP, Intersos provided phone charging to 4,050 asylum-seekers, internet access to 4,044 and emergency phones to 14 asylum seekers. Intersos supported another 800 asylum seekers with referrals and information.
- In collaboration with UNHCR and ADRA as referring partners, Mercy Corps (MC) was implementing a Cash Transferring Program (CTP) in Preševo. MC assisted 184 beneficiaries in total, of which families received 156 cards. 53% of beneficiaries were from Syria, 36% from Afghanistan, 10% from Iraq and 1% from other countries.
- In cooperation with SCRM and UNHCR, MC had video presentations on TV screens in Sid. Presentations were developed by MC as a tool to inform asylum seekers about services available at their current location and the remaining part of their journey, as well as on behavioural/hygiene practices. Teams also continued the provision of internet connection, information via distribution of updated leaflets in Arabic and Farsi/Dari and translation services at train stations in Sid and Preševo, as well as RC in Preševo. Approximately 25,000 people were reached by MC staff during the reporting period.
- Philanthropy continued with distribution of cash cards (value €40) in Preševo and Zaječar. Cash cards were distributed to vulnerable refugee families, so they can meet their immediate needs while they are in Serbia. Throughout this period, Philanthropy distributed 3,650 cash cards to 2,836 refugee families (13,598 individuals).
- DRC mobile protection teams continued regular protection monitoring and protection assistance activities, in two shifts, covering Preševo, Dimitrovgrad and Šid/Adaševci 24/7. They provided information to 24,377 refugees at all three locations, and 10,546 refugees were assisted through immediate response, internal/external referrals and reporting. DRC Protection Officers continued conducting comprehensive interviews, assisting and following up the cases of UASCs, in cooperation with local social welfare centres, HCIT, UNHCR and other relevant national institutions.



Miratovac – Refugees still walk 2.5 km on the dirt road (green border) from the FYR Macedonia to Serbia, Photo@UNHCR

- DRC Women Protection Counselor conducted detailed interviews with vulnerable women in Adaševci RAP, with the purpose of protection screening and improving the response for the most vulnerable women.
- Save the Children (SC) provided accommodation to 147 mothers and 365 children, among which 22 UASCs and 49 babies in the Safe Space premises in Preševo. 349 children (out of which 73 identified as potential UASCs, including 2 girls) and 134 parents were reached and assisted with information and referrals through Mobile Child Safety Team in Preševo. Mobile Child Safety teams in Šid, Dimitrovgrad and Belgrade assisted 416 children with information and referrals, out of which 87 were potential UASCs. In partnership with Group 484, SC started operating night shift mobile teams providing information, referrals and transportation to accommodation in AC Krnjača.
- SC provided transport for 1,465 people - families with children and vulnerable cases - with two vans from RAP Miratovac to the bus stop in Miratovac. SC Mobile Team in Belgrade was providing taxi transportation from the train station to Krnjača.
- PIN/PIPA/Czech Team volunteers assisted SCRM on construction works and in the warehouse of Adaševci RAP. The Czech Team was on duty during the night at Rub halls, together with Operation Mobilization staff (OM) and their volunteers guided asylum-seekers to Rub halls and kept watch while people were sleeping. One male volunteer was always present for security reasons – as instructed by SCRM. PIN+PIPA+Czech Team continued to support family friendly space in Adaševci by bringing supplies – children's clothes, baby bottles, etc.
- NSHC and TDH provided recreational outreach activities in Adaševci to 829 children and 132 parents; 4,800 winter and hygienic items were distributed to 3,021 beneficiaries, mainly children and mothers, and 233 beneficiaries benefited from psychological first aid activities.
- With the support of International Rescue Committee (IRC), NSHC provided assistance for 1,787 refugees. Services (information, referral to the providers of medical, material, psycho-social etc. assistance) were provided to the vulnerable individuals and groups.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Partners present at the Refugee Protection Working Group Meeting held in Belgrade on 11 February discussed the issue of sheltering UASCs over 14 years of age, who would not necessarily be protected by the fosterage option. UNHCR, UNICEF and Save the Children explored shelter and funding options, including establishment of Children's Villages.
- NRC-Praxis noted cases of refugee minors wrongly registered as being of age.
- Preševo RC lacked a sufficient number of Farsi interpreters.

Education

Achievements and Impact

- NSTR

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



Health

Achievements and Impact

- DRC and UNHCR continued providing medical assistance to refugees in Miratovac and Preševo, with the help of two medical teams, as well as in Belgrade with two medical teams engaged through the local Primary Health Centres. DRC/UNHCR continued to provide medicines through contracted local state pharmacies. DRC Medical Team continued to monitor hospitalised PWSNs, in order to ensure additional support.

- 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.
- In coordination with Preševo RC Medical Unit and RC Management, Caritas started providing plastic neck bags (passport size, made of transparent plastic) for the medical files (records) for refugees who received medical assistance and therapy in Preševo. Acute or chronically ill refugees will carry their medical record around their neck on their route, and doctors and staff in centres along the route will be able to follow up on diagnosis of their colleagues and provide efficient medical assistance.
- On 12 February, a healthy baby girl was born to a refugee woman in Adaševci, with the assistance of a former obstetric nurse from the MBC employed by the SOS CV. Both mother and baby were transferred to Sremska Mitrovica hospital soon thereafter and assisted with NFIs by SOS CV, Divac Foundation and Czech volunteers.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR and partners HCIT, Society for Peace Development and Ecology (SPDE), Asylum Info Center (BCHR), Sigma Plus and Amity distributed 9,610 litres of water, 772 kgs of food, 1,758 kgs of WFP high-energy biscuits (HEBs) and 96 kgs of biscuits in Preševo, Šid and Belgrade.
- UNICEF-supported mother-and-baby corners (MBCs), where lactating mothers can continue to breastfeed, receive information on breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding, and access necessary hygiene items, continued to be operational in Preševo and Miratovac (operating 24/7 in partnership with Danish Refugee Council), and in Adaševci and Šid (operating 24/7 in partnership with World Vision and SOS Children's Villages). UNICEF supported 2,184 babies and 1,143 mothers in four MBCs. 609 mothers were assisted with infant young child feeding counselling and 673 babies received nutritional support.
- Remar SOS and OM were distributing tea and soup in Adaševci RAP 24/7.
- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide food parcels daily in Preševo, Adaševci and Belgrade (Krnjača AC and the Red Cross container in the park near the central railway and bus station), based on the needs. Caritas distributed 6,150 food parcels, 15,400 portions of soup and 7,500 tea cups.
- NRC-Praxis started distributing food to refugees in Dimitrovgrad (including baby formula and bottles) and Belgrade, especially to refugees arriving from Dimitrovgrad by train and those waiting for registration in Belgrade when there were no other humanitarian actors providing food. Over 800 refugees were assisted.
- SC distributed 574 baby food kits in Preševo and Beograd.
- CRS/Divac team distributed food and NFIs 24/7 at Adaševci RAP. 3,108 food packages were distributed in Adaševci and 1,300 food packages were distributed to asylum seekers at Dimitrovgrad RAP.
- CARE/NSHC distributed 4,862 food packages in Šid, Adaševci and Preševo.
- Philanthropy continued to deliver food in Miratovac RAP. Aid was distributed 24/7. Around 20,000 refugees were supported. Delivered aid included food items (tuna/sardine cans, dry bread, snacks, juices, baby food, etc.). In cooperation with Red Cross, Philanthropy continued to provide food parcels in Šid for 250 persons per day.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- PIN/PIPA/Czech volunteers team noted that food distribution was not available on certain nights in Adaševci and pointed to the need for hot tea distribution in Šid.

Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- Regular activities on improving and maintaining sanitary and hygiene conditions at RC in Preševo continued. These UNHCR-funded, DRC-monitored activities were related to both indoor and outdoor capacities of the compound (sanitary blocks, containers, RHUs, open areas, etc.). Outdoor sanitary blocks constructed by Philanthropy, supervised by DRC, were in full use, ensuring proper standards of hygiene and sanitation. DRC performed the backfilling of a part of the RC, as it deteriorated due to winter conditions.
- UNICEF's WASH expert was deployed to Dimitrovgrad and provided technical advice on the operation and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities at the RAP.
- UNICEF's WASH expert continued to assess the situation in Preševo, Miratovac, Šid and Adaševci to identify gaps and needs in WASH and provided recommendations for improvement to SCRM.
- Caritas-CRS bathroom container with showers, located in Miksalište-Belgrade, was used to provide refugees a chance of taking a free shower during their travel. During the reporting period 354 refugees and migrants took a shower in this container.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) were cleaning the Bus parking area in Adaševci 24/7.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The need for warm showers at all entry and exit points remained unmet.
- PIN/PIPA/Czech volunteers team noted that blankets were not washed in the rubble halls in Adaševci RAP.

Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- Phase II Rehabilitation works on the Tobacco Factory in Preševo, conducted by DRC and funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA), were completed. Phase II involved two family pavilions and a CFS, an Infirmary, Laundry room and a Warehouse.
- UNHCR numbered the refugee housing units in Preševo RC to facilitate their management.
- 28 accommodation containers for the border police staff in Čakanovci, funded by UNHCR, were equipped and put in place.
- In Sid, DRC completed the rehabilitation of premises intended for social activities and the prefabricated facility, funded by DANIDA and DFID.
- In Krnjaca AC, DRC completed the adaptation of 3 accommodation pavilions, with the funding from the European Union.
- UNHCR and partners HCIT, SPDE, Asylum Info Center (BCHR), Sigma Plus and Amity distributed 824 blankets, 3,508 pairs of socks, 3,736 pairs of footwear, 1,470 winter jackets, 1,102 raincoats, 53 sleeping mats, 114 sleeping bags, 1,701 hygiene gels, 215 plastic bags, 930 hygiene packs and 155 plastic sheets in Preševo, Belgrade and Šid area.



*Miratovac – Cleanliness of this refugee ai/transit point was greatly improved,
Photo@UNHCR*

- DRC distributed NFIs in three locations: Adaševci, Preševo/Miratovac and Dimitrovgrad. Through ECHO funds, DRC provided winterisation items - clothes for men, women and children - targeting the PSNs. 9,296 winterisation items were distributed through the DRC/UNICEF CFS.
- UNICEF, through its partners DRC, World Vision and HCIT, reached 4,277 children with winter items (raincoats, sets of winter hats, scarves and gloves, winter jackets, thermal underwear sets, winter boots, winter socks, overall outerwear for babies and thermal cover baby sets).
- CRS/Divac agreed with SCRM that containers provided for urgent accommodation of the PSNs in Dimitrovgrad would be moved to the new RAP once it is completed.
- NRC-Praxis received a supply of NFIs in Dimitrovgrad (winter jackets, sweatshirts, trousers, shoes, socks, gloves) sufficient for the next couple of months; 152 refugees were assisted with NFIs in the reporting period.
- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide hygiene packs for women and babies daily in Preševo, Belgrade and Adaševci. Caritas distributed 2,000 hygiene parcels for women, 560 hygiene parcels for children, 164 sleeping bags, 334 rain jackets for adults, 360 rain jackets for children, 682 fleece jackets for adults, 100 fleece jackets for children, 1,720 winter shoes for adults, 168 winter shoes for children, 860 winter hats for adults, 2,732 pairs of socks for adults and 1,072 pairs of socks for children.
- SC Mobile Child Safety teams in Belgrade and Preševo distributed 326 clothing items, 462 winterization items and 127 hygiene kits for babies.
- CRS/Divac supported asylum seekers with winter clothes 24/7 at the Adaševci RAP. The organization distributed 1,511 jacket, 1,913 pairs of boots, 1,179 blankets, 1,086 winter sets for adults and 317 winter sets for children (hats, gloves and scarves) as well as 1,194 pairs of socks. In Dimitrovgrad, the team assisted 607 refugees with winter clothes.
- CARE/Nexus distributed boots, trousers, jackets and scarves in Preševo RC.
- People in Need (PIN), People in Peril Association (PIPA) and Czech Team volunteers were working jointly in Adaševci. 20 volunteers assisted 24/7 on the NFI distribution of 700 pairs of shoes, 1,400 packages of children's kits (diapers wet wipes, baby cream, tissues), 1,400 women's kits (feminine pads, wet wipes, tissues, underwear), sweaters, pants and all types of baby and children wear.
- MC used two containers outside the RC in Preševo to shelter most vulnerable refugees. Over 504 beneficiaries (34% women and 35% children) used MC's heated containers as their temporary shelter.
- Philanthropy continued to deliver NFIs in Miratovac RAP. Aid was distributed 24/7 and 5,100 refugees were supported with 7,900 NFIs (diapers, baby wet wipes, winter clothes for children, boots, raincoats, etc.).
- In partnership with Remar SOS, OM was providing a safe place for eating and relaxing operating 24/7 at Adaševci RAP.



Adaševci – CRS/Divac team providing a refugee girl with warmer footwear, Photo@Divac Foundation

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Winterized shelter at the 16 crossing points on the Serbia-Bulgaria border remained a goal still to be achieved. Construction of the new RAP at Dimitrovgrad was not initiated, mainly due to issues concerning land ownership. Gas heaters donated to Dimitrovgrad RAP by NRC-Praxis were not in use, due to SCRM's concern over the possibility of the garage-shelter catching fire from refugees' using the heaters to dry their clothes.
- Emergency shelter in Belgrade remained a challenge, especially during night time and particularly for unregistered male refugees.
- Several partners present at the Refugee Protection Working Group Meeting held on 11 February appealed for a sustainable solution concerning shelter for stranded refugees and migrants.



Support to local communities

Achievements and Impact

- CARE/Nexus continued to provide financial support to the public utility company Moravica for daily garbage collection in Miratovac RAP and twice per week in Miratovac village (the Mosque), for the period up to 30 April 2016.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR

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. The 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). The RTG met on 5 and 12 February.
- The **Refugee Protection Working Group (RPWG)**, Co-chaired by UNHCR and the MoL, met on 11 February in Belgrade. It is the key coordination mechanism for agencies/NGOs operational in the country, as well as a source of information for donors/diplomatic missions who attend its meetings as observers. RPWG has over 150 members and meets on a fortnightly basis. 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). A Child Protection Sub-Working Group of the RPWG, Co-chaired by MoL & UNICEF, met in Belgrade on 12 February.
- WG on Shelter/NFI/WASH met on 1 February in Belgrade.
- Field coordination meetings take place every week in Preševo (co-chaired by MoL & UNHCR) and Šid (co-chaired by SCRM & UNHCR).
- The monthly **Partners' Briefing**, where UNHCR/UNRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and MoL/Chair of Government WG on Mixed Migration update the diplomatic corps/donors and NGOs on the refugee/migrant situation and the response of UN agencies and their partners in the previous period, took place on 26 January in Belgrade. The next one is scheduled for 25 February 2016.

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Links:

<http://www.unhcr.rs/>