

## KEY FIGURES

(MARCH 2017)

**707**

Registered intentions to seek asylum in Serbia

**48%**

of registered refugees and migrants were minors

**21**

Applications for asylum

**0**

Persons granted refugee status

**0**

Persons granted subsidiary protection

## PRIORITIES

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

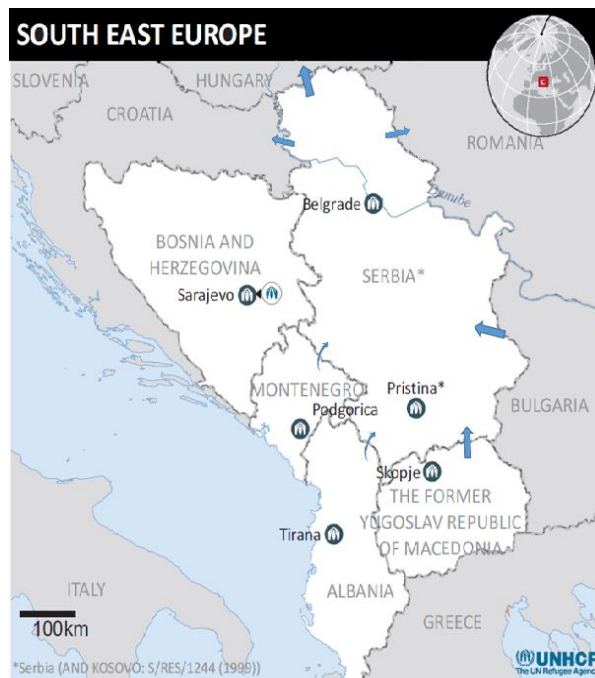
# SERBIA

## INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

MARCH 2017

### Highlights

- The overall number of refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants counted in Serbia averaged 7,800. An average of 6,700 (86%) of them were sheltered in 17 heated government facilities. The others were staying rough in Belgrade city centre, in the North near the Hungarian border and in the West near the border with Croatia.
- On 24 March, UNHCR and partners surveyed refugees/migrants in Belgrade city centre. Amongst 1,395 counted - all male - 368 agreed to be interviewed. Most were from Afghanistan (85%), followed by Pakistan. 11% of the interviewees confirmed to be sheltered in Obrenovac Transit Centre (TC) but come to the city regularly. 125 were UASCs, mostly Afghan. Over 50% of those profiled had reached Serbia in the previous four months; 64% stated they were waiting for smugglers in order to help them reach either France or Italy.
- Unfortunately, the accident which happened on 2 February in Šid, when four Algerian men sustained life-threatening injuries after accidentally triggering an explosion on a cargo train carriage transporting fuel, ended tragically for one of the victims, who passed away after more than two months of intensive care. The three other survivors applied for assisted voluntary return home to Algeria.
- On 6 March, the Spokesperson of UNHCR in Geneva Cécile Pouilly expressed concern about a new law which was adopted that very day by the Hungarian Parliament and which foresees the mandatory detention of all asylum seekers, including many children, for the entire length of the asylum procedure. In practice, it means that every asylum-seeker, including children, will be detained in shipping containers surrounded by high razor wire fence at the border for extended periods of time. The full UNHCR statement can be found [here](#). The EC Commissioner for Human Rights Nils Muižnieks also expressed his concern over the new Hungarian law in his [statement](#) from 8 March.
- On 8 March, Serbian police informed that two bodies were found in the river Danube, near the place Bezdán and the border with Hungary, suspected to be refugees/migrants who had attempted to cross into Hungary irregularly. The bodies were in a state of decomposing and circumstances of drowning and the identity of the casualties remained unknown.



## UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

### Operational Context

Of those refugees/migrants/asylum-seekers accommodated in governmental facilities, most were not adult men (41%), but children (43%) or women (16%). Over 80% of them had fled the so-called “refugee-producing countries”, including Afghanistan (54%), Iraq (18%) and Syria (8%).

Unaccompanied and separated refugee children (UASC) continued arriving daily, mainly from Bulgaria. By now, at least 900 UASCs were estimated to be in Serbia, with almost 700 accommodated in government centres, as well as close to 200 in Belgrade city centre.

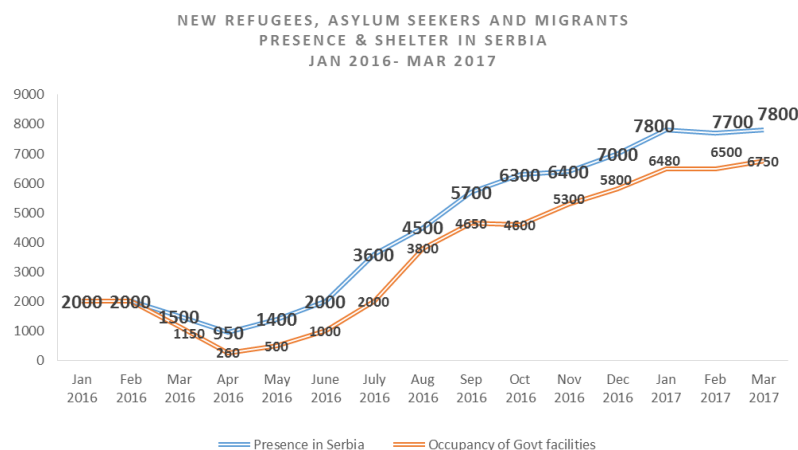
A total of 238 asylum-seekers were admitted regularly into Hungary in March. During the same period, almost 200 asylum-seekers informed UN and partners to have been denied access to asylum procedures in Hungary and 205 stated to have been denied access to asylum procedures in Croatia, but instead been collectively expelled back into Serbia, with some alleging maltreatment.

On 10 March, the authorities gathered 112 unregistered refugees/migrants (83 men, 1 couple and 27 unaccompanied minors), who had been squatting in a few locations in/near Subotica and transported them to Preševo Reception Centre (RC). Most were from Pakistan, also from Syria and Afghanistan, and had already spent several months in Serbia unregistered. UNHCR and partners supported their admission to the RC, including health screening/treatment and provision of NFIs.

On 13 March, the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (The Lanzarote Committee), published a special report on protecting children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The report, based on responses provided by 41 States to the Committee, identified many challenges including, *inter alia*, inadequate reception facilities, lengthy asylum procedures and problems with age verification and identification of victims. You may find the full report [here](#).

On 20 March, the Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) presented its annual report “*Right to Asylum in the Republic of Serbia 2016*”, which documents and analyses improvements and also systemic issues relating to access to fair and efficient asylum procedures and refugee protection in Serbia. The full report is available [here](#).

In March, 707 intentions to seek asylum in Serbia were registered. 43% were made by men, 9% by women and 48% were registered for children. Most applications were made by citizens of Afghanistan (45%), Iraq (20%), Pakistan (16%), Syria (6%) and other nationalities (13%). One negative (one rejection) first-instance decision was recorded in March and no positive decisions were made by the Asylum Office, just as there were no positive decisions in the first two months of 2017.



## Achievements



### Achievements and Impact

- UNICEF-supported child-friendly spaces (CFS) were operational in Preševo, Bujanovac, Šid, Dimitrovgrad and Krnjača with the Danish Refugee Council (DRC).
- Since the beginning of 2017, 1,124 children received support in the UNICEF-supported family support hubs, child-friendly spaces and mother and baby corners (MBCs).
- UNICEF continued to support the social welfare system in Preševo, Bujanovac, Belgrade, Šid and Subotica. Centres for Social Work (CSW) continued to provide support to refugee/migrant children and to ensure the identification and protection of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC).
- During March, UNICEF supported CSWs to identify and support 410 UASCs (Belgrade: 156, Bujanovac: 82, Preševo: 38, Šid: 50 and Subotica: 84). The social workers interviewed identified children and made necessary referrals to the police (to obtain intention to seek asylum documents), health services when necessary and to accommodation in relevant facilities, including children's homes.
- UNHCR's implementing partner Humanitarian Center for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT) was present 7 days a week in the North and in the West of the country, continuing with protection, border monitoring, counselling/information dissemination and referral of persons likely in need of international protection to proper institutions. HCIT also documented several serious protection incidents where asylum seekers were victims of violence that happened in Belgrade, in the North (near Kelebija) and in the West (in Šid and near the border with Croatia). In the majority of reported cases it was established that asylum-seekers had been attacked by other foreign nationals (e.g. inflicting knife injuries, threatening and robbing); in two incidents, asylum-seekers were reportedly attacked by two groups of unidentified men, most likely locals who robbed them.
- HCIT documented a lower number of collective expulsions in the North (from Hungary), compared to the previous month, but an increasing number of expulsions from Croatia. Among the most vulnerable ones, HCIT noted an expulsion of a Syrian family with a 11 months old baby, who were expelled on 4 March. HCIT likewise documented the case of the first foreign national (a man from Somalia) who was returned from Hungary under the new rules and registration on 28 March, after having spent two years in Sweden and never having been to Serbia before according to his testimony.
- HCIT identified 70 UASCs in March (22 in Šid and 48 in the North). The majority of newly identified UASCs were referred to locally competent CSW. It was observed that some UASCs were under strong influence of unknown older men in their groups, and were refusing any assistance despite being in an extremely dire situation.
- HCIT interpreters for Arabic and Farsi provided free of charge assistance in Subotica and Novi Sad Courts in cases relating to asylum seekers.
- HCIT teams assisted persons of concern (PoCs) in the General Hospital in Subotica and enabled 5 PoCs to avail of the services of the dentist in Subotica, also covering the cost of the treatment.
- Psychosocial Innovation Network (PIN) provided PFA, psychosocial support and counselling to 269 persons (219 male, 50 female; 159 minors and 110 adults). Majority of people were from Afghanistan (177), followed by Iraq (22), Iran (21), Syria (20), Pakistan (9), Cuba (6), Libya, Nigeria Sudan and Uzbekistan (1 each).
- PIN was providing PSS and/or conducting educational, psychological and occupational workshops in different locations in Belgrade – Centre for Minors "Vasa Stajić", Belgrade city centre (Park area, Miksalište and Info Park), Shelter for Foreigners in Padinska Skela and PIN premises. During March, PIN extended its activities to Primary school "Branko Pešić" in Zemun, working with refugees from AC Krnjača who are currently enrolled in the school (including escort from AC to school). In addition, since March, PIN is present in rented spaces in Sjenica and Tutin (near ACs), working at each location twice per week. PIN continued with weekly visits to Slankamen.
- PIN was regularly administrating questionnaires to the refugees in order to obtain data on integration capacities and difficulties, mental health of refugees/asylum-seekers/migrants in Serbia and evaluation of support system in Serbia.

- The Operation Mobilization (OM) tent in Adaševci became a community spot in the centre. Children, women and men felt safe and protected within the tent. They were enjoying, as much as it was possible in current conditions, the atmosphere in the tent and the presents of many volunteers from Serbia and other countries.
- CARE in partnership with NSHC continued to provide support to refugees squatting in Belgrade city. 347 beneficiaries participated in activities through the Activity corner in Miksalište.
- CARE in partnership with NEXUS organized recreational outdoor activities for 775 beneficiaries in Preševo RC.
- CARE in partnership with Impuls organized recreational activities for 674 beneficiaries in Sjenica and Tutin ACs.
- NSHC with support from TDH provided services 7/7 to 679 children and 184 mothers at the Mother and Baby Corner (MBC) in Miksalište in Belgrade; 214 beneficiaries benefited from psychological first aid and support activities.
- NSHC with support from IRC provided 1,531 protection services 7/7 to 887 refugees in Belgrade and Subotica. The services included identification and referrals, information and counselling, protection mitigation measures, and other services. IRC team also provided protection and other services to 95 children and mothers at MBC.
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS)/Balkan Centre for Migration (BCM) teams provided translation assistance (Arabic and Farsi) to refugees/migrants/asylum-seekers and partner organisations (Philanthropy, Save the Children, Atina, UNHCR, Indigo, DRC, UNICEF, IOM, MDM and IDC) and authorities (Clinical Centre Niš, Health Centre (HC) Šid, General Hospital (GH) Sremska Mitrovica, GH Novi Sad, HC Bujanovac, HC Preševo, and GH Vranje, Šid Court, Higher Court Sremska Mitrovica, Šid police inspectors, Prosecutor in Šid, Municipality of Sremska Mitrovica, Police in Preševo & Bujanovac, Information & Security Agency, CSWs Bujanovac & Preševo, Public Prosecutor in Vranje, Public Defense Attorney Bujanovac and Asylum Office in Preševo) in 2,579 instances, in Šid, Belgrade, Bujanovac and Preševo. The CRS/BCM teams provided legal assistance in the aforementioned locations in 52 instances.
- With support from UNFPA, NGO Atina conducted educational activities (English language, literacy classes, and educational empowerment workshops on important topics such as: gender roles, recognition of gender-based violence (GBV) and human rights ) in four locations – Krnjača AC, Reintegration Centre NGO Atina, Bogovađa AC, Banja Koviljača AC, Preševo and Bujanovac RCs. During March, life-skills education activities for youth in Preševo and Bujanovac RC were also initiated. Twice per week, classes in natural and social sciences were conducted, where attendees had the opportunity to learn about major historical events and personages, and also about natural phenomena.
- NGO Atina with UNFPA organized empowerment workshops for women and girls, asylum-seekers in Krnjača AC. During March, 10 workshops were carried out in Krnjača AC, Preševo and Bujanovac RC for 118 women and 7 girls (37 from Afghanistan, 7 from Iraq and 2 from Ghana).
- NGO Atina mobile teams, supported by UNFPA, had 21 urgent interventions in the field – 17 cases of GBV were identified - 12 women, 4 girls and 2 boys who survived physical, psychological, sexual violence and forced marriage. Atina's mobile teams provided support through outreach activities to 46 people in the field, and long-term support to 17 persons from the refugee population.
- UNFPA was drafting Annex for Belgrade (as part of GBViE SOPs), due to increased vulnerability of unaccompanied and separated minors who are not accommodated within governmental facilities.
- UNFPA Leaflets on sexual and reproductive health (in Farsi, Urdu and Arabic) were sent to Maltese Order organization who are working closely with SCRIM staff and Caritas Subotica on providing necessary assistance in the transit centre in Subotica.
- Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC) provided the following services in Belgrade (Miksalište): information dissemination (in Pashto, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, English, French and Spanish), interpretation, cultural mediation and orientation, psychosocial aid, identification and referrals of extremely vulnerable individuals (EVIs), advocacy and referral to legal, medical and other forms of assistance, free Wi-Fi/phone charging access, escort and transport to different facilities, NFI distribution, etc. Services were provided both independently and in cooperation with other actors. CRPC team provided different services to almost 6,300 beneficiaries/visits (Afghanistan 53%, Pakistan 13%,



*NSHC/IRC Sewing Workshop at Adaševci TC, @NSHC,  
March 2017*



Iraq 11%, Syria 8%, etc.; 65% were men, 8% women and 27% children). Of the total number of children, CRPC identified 196 (11%) possible UASC cases.

- With the help of UNHCR, CRPC provided assistance in logistics, transport and escort for 232 ISAC beneficiaries to



Visit to Petrovaradin Fortress during a field trip for refugee students of “Branko Pešić” school in Zemun, Novi Sad (Serbia), @CRPC, 30 March 2017

- Preševo, Pirot, Bujanovac, Divljana, Bogovađa, Adaševci, Sjenica and Banja Koviljača centres.
- With the help of UNHCR, CRPC continued providing free Wi-Fi in Obrenovac TC and assisted UNHCR’s visits to Obrenovac RC (Monday-Friday).
- In coordination with CSW, IOM and UNHCR/DRC, CRPC assisted in escort, transport and support for PoCs accommodated in Obrenovac RC.
- Two profiling researches and two counting exercises were conducted by CRPC in March, in order to assess the structure and the current needs of refugee/migrant population situated in the barracks behind the train station in Belgrade.
- With the help of UNHCR, CRPC conducted a total of 65 assisted and independent visits to accommodation centres in Serbia (Krnjača AC, Obrenovac RC, Bogovađa, Banja Koviljača, Tutin and Sjenica ACs, Principovac, Adaševci and Šid TCs).
- Praxis continued providing information to refugees/migrants/asylum-seekers in Belgrade about the current situation, available legal pathways and available services (accommodation, transportation to asylum/reception centres, legal assistance, medical care, food, NFIs, etc.). In March 2017, Praxis provided support to a total of 659 newly arrived refugees/migrants/asylum-seekers (376 adults and 283 children) in Belgrade. Out of the total number of children, 186 were potential UASCs (66%). Praxis also identified vulnerable cases (families with children, pregnant and lactating women, UASCs, the ill, the elderly and persons who have exhausted all resources and are at risk of turning to smugglers, etc.). A total of 301 persons (144 new arrivals and 157 beneficiaries identified earlier) were referred to different organizations/institutions for targeted assistance. Praxis also provided protection by presence and escorted refugees to the Police Station for registration – 163 were referred to the Police Station in Savska Street for registration. In March, Praxis continued informing refugees and migrants sleeping rough in Belgrade about the possibility of accommodation in Obrenovac TC, and in particular focused on identifying the most vulnerable among them, such as those with health problems and UASCs, and provided them with adequate and relevant information. When there was no organized transportation provided, Praxis provided transportation (47 cases in March) by covering the costs of train/bus tickets to accommodation centres (mainly bus tickets for Lazarevac, Pirot, Subotica, Banja Koviljača and Lajkovci and train tickets for Šid). Praxis also covered the costs of transportation by taxi to the Police station for the purpose of registration of most vulnerable beneficiaries. Praxis performed protection monitoring and recorded the cases of violation of refugees’ rights along the route.
- UNHCR’s implementing partner Group for Children and Youth “Indigo” implemented its project activities in Niš, Bujanovac, Preševo, Pirot and Divljana. In Preševo and Bujanovac, Indigo worked mostly with unaccompanied and other vulnerable children, providing them with first psychological aid, identifying and referring them to targeted assistance, organising educational and recreational activities, following their involvement in non-formal educational activities and everyday life in accommodation centres. Indigo provided 757 services to children in Bujanovac RC and 1,492 services to children in Preševo RC. Indigo, together with UNHCR and CSWs, conducted 12 BIA (best interest assessment) interviews in Preševo.
- In Preševo and Bujanovac, Indigo referred 7 cases to the doctors, 6 cases to CSW and 47 children were referred for distribution of NFIs.
- There were two new relocations of 167 people in total from the North to Preševo RC. Among them, there were 45 UASCs. In these two groups of people, a significant number of UASCs reported they had suffered different kinds of violence on their journey, especially at the Serbia-Hungary border, and Indigo produced 19 Protection Incident Reports and six Push Back Reports. A number of UASCs reported having been separated from their family members, so Indigo produced four Family Separation Reports.
- Indigo continued providing interpretation services (for Arabic, Farsi and Urdu) in Preševo and Bujanovac RCs. 4,508 interpretation services were provided to adults and 3,068 interpretation services to children.



HCIT staffer counseling on asylum procedures and registration unregistered men, Šid (Serbia),  
©HCIT, 17 March 2017

- In Doljevac (near Niš), Indigo continued to assist a woman and her two sons, who survived a car accident on 29 December 2016. Indigo provided information, psychological first aid and NFIs. Moreover, Indigo was monitoring the situation of 4 unaccompanied minors accommodated in the Youth Upbringing Institution in Niš.
- At the end of February, Indigo started with activities in Divljana and Pirot RC. There are 123 children in Pirot, including one UASC, and 105 children in Divljana, including two UASCs. Indigo worked on assessing the needs of children in these centres, and on identifying the resources within the refugee community that could help with the implementation. Starting from April, Indigo will be implementing informal educational and recreational activities twice per week in Divljana, and once per week in Pirot.

The main challenge, as before, was how to help the children cope with uncertainty, how to provide them with valid, timely information and how to deal with the increase in anxiety among them. Moreover, as the weather improved, more and more children were leaving accommodation centres on their own, or referred to smugglers, in order to continue their journey. During March, 60 UASCs left Preševo RC on their own and 12 UASCs left Bujanovac RC. Indigo were continuously working on raising awareness and presenting the risks of such practice, all in the interest of keeping the children safe.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Prolonged stay in improvised shelters (barracks) in Belgrade results in elevated protection risks - substance abuse, SGBV, health risks, etc.
- Lack of legal status for some categories of persons of concern (incl. those previously issued with cancellation of stay and/or inability to re-enter the asylum system for those previously registered with asylum intentions, who have meanwhile attempted to re-enter the EU irregularly) exacerbates protection risks.
- Registration at the Police Station in Savska Street in Belgrade was performed with frequent delays. Priority in registration was given to families.
- Protection of potential UASCs identified in Belgrade (many of whom moved between Obrenovac TC and Belgrade city centre) remained challenging as many of them refused to get registered, while some refused to even talk to a social worker.
- The rising tensions and anxiety among refugees and migrants, caused partly by their unresolved status and uncertain future prospects, resulted in several incidents of violence among them.

## Education

### Achievements and Impact

- NSHC with support from IRC ran a Sewing Workshop at Adaševci TC - sewing training and a variety of occupational and social activities for women accommodated in this transit centre, six days per week. Thirty-eight women completed the sewing training in March. Bed sheets, pillow cases and towels produced in these workshops are used in reception/transit and asylum centres in Serbia.
- English classes for refugees continued at Info Park's space in Belgrade every day in the afternoons.
- RAS organized a week's training for volunteers and teachers provided by the UK organization World-Wide Education Project. Around 35 professionals attended the training, most of them already involved in the provision of formal and informal education to children on the move (refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants) in the territory of Serbia.
- CRPC continued assisting the Centre for Social Work in providing escort for UASCs from Krnjača AC to "Branko Pešić" school in Zemun.

- With the help of UNICEF and CSW, a field trip to Novi Sad was organized on March 30 for 34 refugee children. Accompanied by the legal guardian and CRPC staff, the children visited Novi Sad city centre, the central park and Petrovaradin fortress.
- UNICEF-supported toy libraries for children aged 3-6 were operational in Bujanovac RC (in cooperation with DRC) and in Principovac TC (in cooperation with SOS CV).
- UNICEF implemented programmes for development of digital competencies among young people in Šid TC (in cooperation with DRC) and in Principovac, Adaševci, Bujanovac and Preševo (in cooperation with SOS CV).
- Programmes supporting the development of basic math and science and cultural expression competencies for children aged 8-9 were implemented by UNICEF/DRC in Preševo and Bujanovac RCs.
- With UNICEF's support, 80 children, aged 7-18, were attending eight primary schools and one secondary school in Belgrade.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Sustainable access to formal education is yet to be ensured for refugee/migrant/asylum-seeking children.



## Health

### Achievements and Impact

- WHO continued to support the Institute of Public Health (IPH) of Serbia, the Ministry of Health, relevant health institutions and partner NGOs, in coordination of healthcare provision. The main issue remained body lice infestation among refugees and migrants squatting in abandoned buildings in Belgrade, Šid and Subotica, which spills over to persons accommodated in government facilities.
- The CRS/BCM medical teams provided medical assistance in Šid, Belgrade, Bujanovac and Preševo in 6,499 instances and psychological assistance in 259 instances.
- UNFPA conducted one day visit of transit centres Subotica and Sombor to identify the health situation and gaps in health assistance; within the UNFPA/DRC project "Strengthening access to and quality of family planning and reproductive health services for all", there were 159 interventions in March, of which 68 were pregnancy-related interventions.
- CRPC cooperated with UNHCR/DRC and on site-medical teams in Belgrade, Krnjača AC staff and other actors – providing interpretation/CM, escort, advocacy and transportation to secondary medical and other facilities – in 403 cases.
- UNICEF-supported MBCs were operational in Belgrade, Dimitrovgrad, Preševo, Bujanovac and Šid. In accommodation centres where only a few children are present, support to the development of different modalities of infant and young child feeding in emergencies (IYCF-E) support, through medical teams providing health service for the whole population, was on-going. Since the beginning of 2017, 454 infants (under 2) accessed UNICEF-supported mother and baby care centre services, including health and nutrition services. Since the beginning of 2017, 239 mothers benefited from UNICEF-supported IYCF-E counselling at family support hubs, CFSs and MBCs.
- In centres where UNICEF is present the screening all children aged 6-59 months with Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) for undernutrition is part of routine work.
- UNICEF continued the consultations with partners on reviewing currently distributed food in order to have more age-appropriate food for children.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- CRPC noted a need for increased access to dental care in Belgrade.

## Food Security and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- CARE/ECHO in partnership with NSHC provided 198,090 meals (3 meals per day) for 3 transit centres in Šid municipality - Adaševci, Šid and Principovac.
- CARE in partnership with NSHC distributed food supplement items (milk, biscuits and fruits) at 4 transit/asylum centres (Adaševci, Šid, Principovac and Krnjača): 12,460 milks, 12,460 biscuits and 3,904.5 kg of fruits.
- CARE in partnership with Impuls distributed food supplement items (milk, biscuits and fruits) in Sjenica and Tutin ACs: 711 milks, 711 biscuits, 711 fruits and 111 baby jars.
- OM was providing hot drinks for the refugees/migrants/asylum-seekers at Adaševci TC every day from 9:30 am to 9:00 pm.
- UNHCR and partners DRC and HCIT distributed 93 kg of high-energy biscuits and 1,884 litres of water, mainly in the north and in the south.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



## Water and Sanitation

### Achievements and Impact

- CARE purchased a water tank and booster for Preševo RC.
- In Adaševci TC, CARE connected the WASH containers to the system and made them functional, purchased boilers for water and heating systems.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



## Shelter and NFIs

### Achievements and Impact



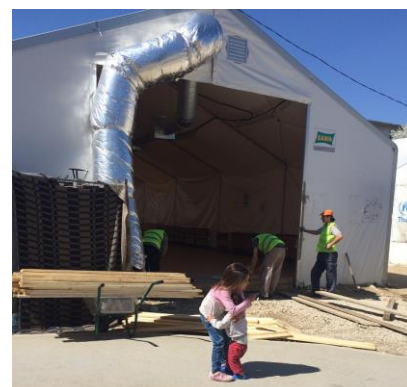
OM tent in Adaševci TC receiving a new, spring-look,  
@OM, 27 March 2017

- In AC Sjenica new facility, CARE reconstructed the laundry room and replaced doors on bedrooms.
- CARE in partnership with NSHC delivered 5,300 NFI items for transit centres Adaševci, Šid and Principovac (towels, pillowcases and sheets) and distributed 4,080 NFI items (socks, underwear, T-shirts, tracksuits and shoes) in Adaševci TC and Belgrade city.
- CARE in partnership with NEXUS delivered 2,752 NFI items (jumpers, sweatpants, underwear, undershirts, long underwear, socks, scarves, bras, T-shirts, etc.) in Preševo RC and 1,896 individual hygiene items (razors, sanitary pads, cream, shaving foam, etc.), 2,000 hygienic kits (toothpaste, toothbrush, soap and



shampoo), 1,000 kg of washing powder, 500 l of “Domestos” disinfectant, 1,000 towels and 450 sets of bed linen in Preševo and Bujanovac RCs.

- CARE in partnership with Impuls delivered 500 NFI items for Sjenica and Tutin ACs (pillows and bed linen) and distributed 400 NFI items (shoes) in Sjenica and Tutin ACs and 2,896 hygiene items (diapers, shampoo, sanitary pads, toilet paper, washing powder and razors), again in Sjenica and Tutin ACs.
- CARE reconstructed the roof in Preševo RC.
- CARE rehabilitated the sleeping room and balcony and reconstructed the activity/workshops room in Bujanovac RC.
- In Miksalište, CARE supplied chairs and tables for the activity corner.
- OM was managing a heated tent for 120 people at a time to relax, play, talk etc. in Adaševci TC. The tent was open every day from 8 am to 9 pm. The OM tent received a new, spring outfit, and the women from the TC organized a small International Women’s Day celebration, for women and girls only, with dancing, etc., inside the tent.
- NSHC with support from Terre des Hommes provided 9,501 winter and hygienic items (clothes, shoes, underwear, soap, diapers, etc.) to 1,804 refugees in Belgrade, Subotica, and Šid (747 children, 99 women, and 958 men).
- NSHC with support from IRC provided 2,530 winter items (winter jackets, hats, scarves, socks, boots, etc.) and hygienic items (shampoo, toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, combs, etc.) to 220 refugees in Subotica, Šid, and Belgrade.
- Refugee Aid Serbia (RAS) continued with their distribution of NFIs to newcomers. In March, SCRM gave RAS a permission to distribute inside Šid TC where 320 single men and 300 families, including 140 children, were located. The distribution consisted of shoes, clothes (incl. hats and gloves), hygiene and essential items, as well as toys.
- UNHCR and partners SCRM, CRPC, HCIT and Amity/Sigma plus distributed 577 blankets, 412 plastic bags, 765 hygiene kits, 1,457 pairs of socks, 1,191 adult T-shirts, 253 children’s T-shirts, 670 pair of footwear, 235 pieces of winter clothing for adults (donated by Zara), 169 items of children’s clothing (Zara & Youngone donations), 20 baby kits, 59 raincoats, 235 winter jackets, 525 tracksuits, 6 knitted hats, 2 pairs of gloves, 14 scarves, 1,213 pairs of underwear, 31 items of women’s clothing and 490 items of men’s clothing (Zara), 2,142 sets of bed linen, 28 backpacks, 10 plastic sheets and 44 rechargeable torches.
- UNHCR delivered 360 bunk beds to accommodation centres in Obrenovac, Sjenica, Sombor, Subotica and Šid.
- UNHCR delivered 100 RHUs to Preševo RC.
- 4,380 condoms have been provided through DRC/UNFPA project.
- In Belgrade (Miksalište), CRPC distributed items donated by UNHCR, blankets from MSF and items donated by private donors.
- Since the beginning of 2017, 2,046 children were reached by UNICEF, through its partners DRC (in Preševo, Bujanovac and Šid), HCIT (in Kelebija and Horgoš), and NSHC (in Belgrade), as well as through direct distribution, with basic supplies and health and hygiene items.



UNHCR-sponsored doors installed on the rub halls in Preševo RC, @UNHCR, 29 March 2017

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Adequate accommodation for longer-term shelter and services, in and outside camps, for at least 8,000 refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers is needed, as well as more temporary accommodation/voucher schemes needed for contingency.
- Overcrowded reception facilities in some locations caused protection gaps/concerns, resulting in increased risk of SGBV and unsanitary conditions.
- CRPC noted the need for more distributions of footwear to refugees/migrants in Belgrade.



## Support to local communities

- Within the USAID-funded project, UNDP renovated the Center for Social Welfare (CSW) in Subotica, and adapted the space for the counselling of women victims of domestic violence, often accompanied by minor children. The reconstructed CSW premises were ceremonially opened on March 8, 2017, in honor of International Women's Day. Subotica's local authorities identified the Center's renovation as a top priority for the City, given the



*The new Subotica CSW unit for woman victims of domestic abuse. @UNDP, March 2017*

increased demand for the CSW services following last year's influx of refugees and migrants. In this

way, UNDP ensured better working conditions for the Center's 60 employees and better services to its beneficiaries. On an annual basis, the CSW provides services to more than 12,000 individuals,

including the refugees and migrants located in Subotica, who are regular users of CSW services. The new premises are open to and welcome both the vulnerable local and the displaced women. The

Deputy Director of USAID's Office of Democratic and Economic Growth Jeffrey Skarin, UNDP Deputy Representative Steliana Nedera, State Secretary at the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Government (MPALSG) Ivan Bošnjak, State Secretary at the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MLEVSA) Nenad Ivanišević, Assistant Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Ivan Gerginov, as well as a Member of the Subotica's City Council for Social Affairs - attended the opening ceremony.

- On March 28, 2017, within the Government of Japan-funded project, UNDP delivered complete technical documentation to the Bosilegrad Municipality, to enable the construction of waste water treatment (WWT) plant. The documentation was handed over to the Municipality by Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-Governance Ms. Ana Brnabić and has strategic importance as it represents the key step towards long-term resolution of this environmental problem shared by three neighbouring countries – Serbia, Bulgaria and Macedonia. The pollution of Dragovištica River, in addition to having a negative impact on the environment, threatens the health of residents of this border municipality. Better living conditions for all the people residing in Bosilegrad, including the migrants at the local Reception Centre, will also support tourism plans and local economic development, while strengthening social cohesion. Prior to preparing the WWT plant technical documentation, UNDP also enabled engagement of necessary medical staff for the local Primary Health Care Centre, and prepared technical documents for the conversion of the old hospital into a new Home for the Elderly. Besides Minister Brnabić, the MDULS State Secretary Ivan Bošnjak, Mayor of Bosilegrad Mr. Vladimir



*Representatives of UNDP, USAID, MLEVSA, SCRM and MDULS receiving Thank You Plaques from the Director of Subotica CSW, @UNDP, 8 March 2017*



*Minister A. Brnabić (2<sup>nd</sup> to the left) and UNDP Deputy Resident Representative S. Nedera (2<sup>nd</sup> to the right) hand over technical documentation to Mayor of Bosilegrad (centre), @UNDP, 28 March 2017*

Zaharijev, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Steliana Nedera, Mr. Dušan Arbutina, representative of the Embassy of Japan and Mr. Slobodan Savović, representative of SCRМ, participated in the handover event.

- On 30 March 2017, UNDP ceremonially opened recently reconstructed basketball courts and the new open-air gym in Palić Lake Park, within the Government of Japan-funded project for “Strengthening local resilience in Serbia: Mitigating the impact of migration crisis”. The Mayor of Subotica Mr. Bogdan Laban, MLEVSA State Secretaries Mr. Nenad Ivanišević and Mr. Vladimir Ilić, Assistant Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Mr. Ivan Gerginov, Mr. Dušan Arbutina, representative of the Embassy of Japan and Mr. Žarko Petrović from UNDP



emphasized the importance of ensuring opportunities for a better, healthier life of Subotica residents, while safeguarding the social cohesion between the local population and migrants located in the city and surrounding areas. Additionally, the new sport facilities set up in Palić Lake



UNDP renovated the basketball court and installed a new open space gym, for the residents, refugees/migrants and tourists at Palić (Subotica), @UNDP, March 2017

Park will enrich the tourism offer and contribute to the economic development of this popular tourist spot near Subotica.

- Citizens meet with the refugees/migrants in Miksalište in Belgrade, where CRPC acted as a mediator between the domicile population and the refugees and migrants.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Protracted stay of refugees and migrants is an ongoing challenge for the quality and coverage of local services.
- There is an increased need for the implementation of intercultural exchange activities to bridge the distance among local and refugee/migrant communities.

## Working in partnership

- The internal coordination mechanism of the UN system in Serbia is the **UN Refugee Theme Group (RTG)**, which meets weekly 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 10 and 24 March.
- The **Refugee Protection Working Group (RPWG)**, Co-chaired by UNHCR and the MoL, met on 27 March in Belgrade. It is the key coordination mechanism for agencies/NGOs operational in the country. RPWG has over 80 members and meets on a monthly basis. Under UNHCR lead, RPWG has given rise to three sub-working groups (SWGs) on: a) Child Protection, b) Non-Food Items (NFIs) and c) Smuggling/Trafficking.
- The monthly **Partners' Briefing**, where UNHCR/UNRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Labour/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 27 February at the UN House in Belgrade.

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