

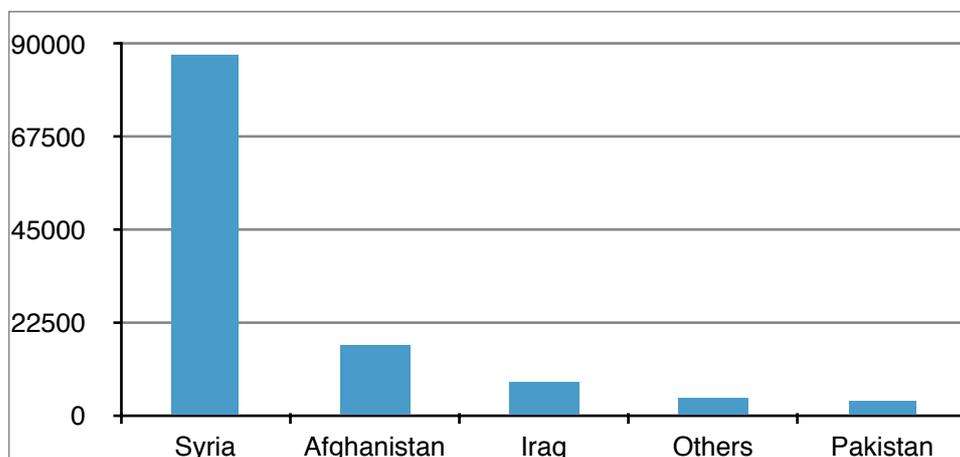
## FYR MACEDONIA

### INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

30 September - 06 October 2015

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 32,486 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into fyR Macedonia during the reporting period 30 September - 06 October with a daily average of more than 4,600. The number of Afghans continue to be high and now constitutes 14% of the total new arrivals up from 11% during last reporting period according to the statistics of the Ministry of Interior. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July 2015 more than 282,000 refugees and migrants have departed.



Intention to apply for asylum: **120,370** applications have been filed from 19 June to 06 October 2015 (source: Ministry of Interior).



*Wheelbarrow transportation of an old man who cannot walk anymore, Vinojug. Photo UNHCR/A.Moller*

## KEY FIGURES

**5,008**

Medical interventions provided

**198**

Medical assistance to children

**4,225**

Unaccompanied minors identified

**33,138**

Food packages were distributed

**5,647**

Blankets were distributed

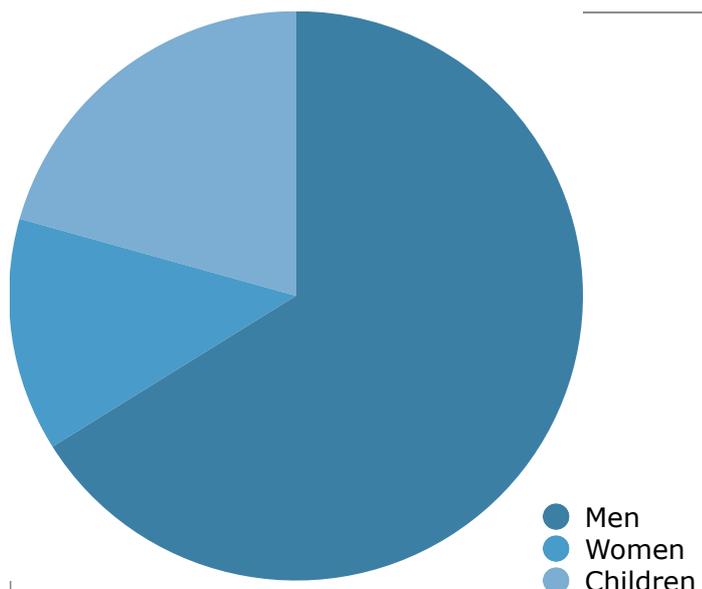
## PRIORITIES

- 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

The Ministry of Interior's officially registered number of refugees and migrants crossing the border from Greece, reached 120,370 persons registered their intention to apply for asylum, including 24,844 children, of whom 4,225 are unaccompanied since 19 June until 06 October 2015. Of these 87,262 (73%) of the arrivals are Syrians, 16,599 (14%) Afghans, 7,841 (7%) Iraqis, 3,152 (3%) Pakistanis and the remainder represent other nationalities such as Iranians Somalis, Palestinians, Congolese and Bangladeshi. 50 applications for asylum were registered out of which 37 were submitted by Syrians in the same period while from January to end of August 1,690 asylum applications were submitted.



## Achievements

### Protection

#### Achievements and Impact

- 32,486 refugees and migrants have crossed the border into fyR Macedonia during the reporting period 30 September - 06 October with a daily average of more than 4,600. The number of Afghans continue to be high and now constitutes 14% of the total new arrivals up from 11% during the last reporting period. Since UNHCR began monitoring the departures from Gevgelija on 1 July more than 282,000 refugees and migrants have departed.
- The Ministry of Interior has restricted access to Vinojug reception centre, only authorized personnel are allowed to pass the bridge towards the entry. This measure prevents illegal vendors from exploiting refugees by selling food, water and other goods much more expensive than the local market prices.
- During the reporting period approximately 1,648 women and 2,120 children were provided with emotional and psychosocial assistance in the Child Friendly Spaces operated by NGO La Strada. La Strada identified and assisted 45 vulnerable individuals. The activities are funded by UNICEF, UNHCR and People in Need.
- During the reporting period approximately 600 persons were offered free legal advice at the Vinojug station by MYLA who also assisted 10 asylum seekers at the Vizbegovo Reception Center with their asylum procedure. MYLA also ensured prioritization for 200 vulnerable individuals for their registration. There are currently 10 MYLA translators working in shifts at the Vinojug site. The MYLA activities are funded by UNHCR.
- Upon UNHCR's initiative "Clowns without borders" are currently performing at the Vinojug site. The artists come from Spain and perform in front of a large audience.
- At the departure site in Tabanovce 10 large plastic containers and 20 plastic garbage bins have been installed.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Trains are often overcrowded and the price is still high. Refugees and migrants pay 25 EUR while the local population pays 7 EUR. UNHCR has advocated directly with the Minister of Interior and written an official complaint letter to the Ministry of Transport. In addition, trains are often overcrowded which easily leads to tensions among the refugees.
- Standard operating procedures for the Vinojug site have been developed by UNHCR and are shared with the Ministries and the Crisis Management Centre for comments and validation. This will allow for enhanced identification and referral of persons with specific needs as well as better registration data on refugees and migrants.



*A family resting in the train at Vinojug. All seats were taken. Photo UNHCR/ A.Moller*

## Health

### Achievements and Impact

- During the reporting period the Red Cross provided 5,008 medical interventions out of which 42 were pregnant women and 198 were children. One wheelchair was distributed.
- 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.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Detection and identification of communicable diseases should be reinforced through outreach activities.
- A second ambulance will increase response time for emergency cases as the only available ambulance at the moment is serving also the local population.

## Food Security and Nutrition

### Achievements and Impact

- Legis and Nun distributed 7,000 food packages in Vinojug and, together with other NGOs, 25,000 in Tabanovce.
- Red Cross distributed 838 food parcels (family packages) and 80 packages of biscuits.
- Help the Refugees in Macedonia distributed 300 food packages, 60 packages of baby food, 59 kg fruit, 1,550 croissants, 300 bottles of water and 92 bottles of children's drinks.
- La Strada distributed 1,200 packages of baby food, 1,200 baby biscuits, 1,200 children's drinks.

## 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 (356 packages), diapers (6,000), and to women; pads (650 pcs) and baby shampoo and powder (300 pcs).

- The Red Cross distributed 107 hygienic parcels (for men, women and babies), 83 diapers, 77 baby parcels and 21,544 bottles of water.
- One rub hall has been cleaned and disinfected and flooring is being installed as part of the winterization plan.
- Volunteers from Dorcas are cleaning outside the Vinjug site, which has considerably improved the hygiene conditions around the site.

#### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- The toilet/shower blog is currently under construction and will be finished soon.



*Clowns Without Borders put a smile on refugee children's faces*



## Communication and Information

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR is financing the installation of a loudspeaker system at the Vinjug site where pre-recorded messages in five languages can be aired in all the site as well as ad hoc messages as needed.
- ProCredit Bank has installed free wifi at Tabanovce. However, the band width needs to be increased to cater for a larger number of users.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

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

## NFIs

### Achievements and Impact

- UNHCR has distributed 1,647 blankets during the reporting period. Nun, Legis and Help the Refugees in Macedonia distributed 4,000 blankets, 2,000 raincoats, 300 pcs of baby clothing, 500 pcs of women's clothing, 800 pcs of men's clothing, 1,000 hats and shawls and 300 pairs of shoes.

### Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Winter items such as clothing and underwear are currently being procured in large scale quantities. In the meantime, local NGOs and civil society are distributing new and second hand clothing to refugees.

## Working in partnership

### Achievements and Impact

- The weekly coordination meeting in Gevgelija took place on Thursday 01 October.
- UNHCR met with the Ministry of Interior and the Minister of Labor and Social Policy to discuss on how to improve the registration procedure.
- UNHCR briefed major donors/embassies (Swiss, Japan, EU, German, Britain, Sweden) on the current challenges, achievements and the coordination mechanisms of the refugee crisis.
- 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, Red Cross, SoS Children's Village, Caritas, Agape, People in need, International Relief-Samaritan's Purse, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Macedonia, JRS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, and WHO.