

UNHCR SERBIA UPDATE

HIGHLIGHTS AND STATISTICS

- The overall situation remained stable with **4,196** new refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants counted in Serbia on 14 January 2018. **3,921** (or 94%) of them are housed in 18 governmental centres, while some 170, mostly men, continued sleeping in informal locations in Belgrade city centre and smaller groups near borders with Croatia or Hungary.
- Shelter improvements by authorities and other stakeholders included fence and lightning in Adasevci Transit Centre (TC), reconstruction of dining room in Kikinda TC, finalization of the medical unit in Obrenovac TC and partitioning of a dormitory in Presevo Reception Centre (RC) for better privacy. Also, UNHCR, through CRS/Divac, started the reconstruction of the kitchen in Vranje RC and launched an update of the [Joint Assessment of Government Centres](#).
- UNHCR and partners assisted **174 new arrivals**, compared to 171 in the preceding two weeks. About half arrived from Bulgaria, 24% by air and 18% from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. For the first time in years, most new arrivals were from Iran (30%), followed by Iraq and Pakistan (22% each), and only 8% from Afghanistan. 61% were adult men, 13% adult women and 26% children.
- UNHCR and partners received reports of a total of **291 collective expulsions** from Croatia, Hungary and Romania, (compared to 311 in the preceding two weeks). They included expulsions of eight men from Croatia and two from Hungary who claimed to have never been to Serbia before.
- On 25 December, some 120-150 refugees and migrants gathered in **protest** near Sid at the border with Croatia, demanding the opening of the border. The protest ended peacefully the following day, when Serbian authorities transported the protestors to government centres.
- Also on 25 December, authorities - notwithstanding interventions by UNHCR and UN Committee Against Torture - refoiled an asylum seeker by extraditing him to his country of origin.
- Several thefts and fights amongst resident of Krnjača and Obrenovac centres, as well as of informal sites in the West, were reported, some even resulting in hospitalisation.
- Upon request of authorities, UNHCR distributed over 7,200 items of clothing, underwear and footwear, as well as 405 New Year's packs for refugee/migrant children in governmental centres.
- UNHCR Serbia successfully closed its 2017 program, which had expended support at the value of 12,5 million USD to authorities' protection and assistance of refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced, and statelessness persons, and commenced its 2018 programme, with an initial budget of 18 million USD, of which 8,5 million has been prioritized. Almost all of 17 Project Partnership Agreements for the implementation of the 2018 programme in Serbia were already signed and first tranches of funding disbursed.
- On 10 January, agreements under the Regional Housing Programme for 21 village houses to refugees from BiH and Croatia in the municipality of Bac were signed.
- In December 2017, **497** individuals registered **intentions to seek asylum in Serbia**. 55% were registered by adult men, 12% by adult women and 33% for children. Most applications were filed by citizens of Iran (30%) or Pakistan (30%), Afghanistan (18%) or Iraq (12%). One person was awarded subsidiary protection, bringing the total number of positive first-instance decisions by the Asylum Office in 2017 to 14, of which 3 received refugee status and 11 subsidiary protection, in comparison to 2016, when 19 persons were granted refugee status and 23 subsidiary protection.



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