

2015 KEY FIGURES

(AS AT END-NOVEMBER)

485,169

Registered intentions to seek asylum in 2015

31.2%

of registered intentions were expressed by minors in November

96%

of registered intentions were from refugee-producing countries in November

PRIORITIES

- Assist the Government and the civil society in responding to the most urgent humanitarian and protection needs of the refugees
- Strengthen the asylum systems in line with applicable international standards

SERBIA

INTER-AGENCY OPERATIONAL UPDATE

7-13 December 2015

Highlights

- The number of refugee arrivals averaged 3,285 per day.
- Out of 485,169 registered intentions to seek asylum in Serbia as at end-November 2015, 548 persons submitted applications for asylum and 75 were interviewed in substantive first instance procedures by the Asylum Office. 16 were recognized as refugees and 14 were awarded subsidiary protection, while 3 applications were rejected. Applicants awarded refugee status originated from Iraq, Syria, South Sudan, Sudan and Ukraine, while those awarded subsidiary protection originated from Lebanon, Libya, Ukraine and Syria.

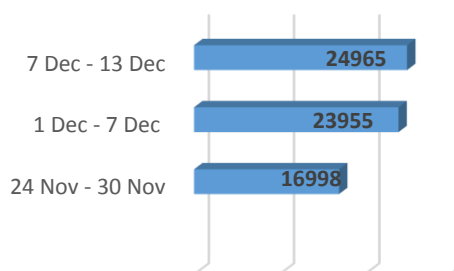
- Croatian Ombudswoman Lora Vidović and the Ombudsman of the Republic of Serbia Saša Janković, visited the Winter Transit Refugee Reception Center in Slavonski Brod, Croatia, and the Refugee Aid Point in Šid, Serbia on 9 December. The two ombudspersons jointly stated that it was unacceptable to discriminate between nationalities with regard to the possibility for refugees to enter Croatia from Serbia.



Printing date: September 2015 Sources: UNCS, UNHCR
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

- On 14 December, the Serbia-EU Intergovernmental Accession Conference was held in Brussels, opening the first two out of 35 EU accession negotiating chapters for Serbia: Chapter 32 on financial control and Chapter 35 on the normalisation of relations between Belgrade and Priština.

Intention to apply for asylum (Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia)
24,965 registered their intention to seek asylum during the reporting period.



UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Operational Context

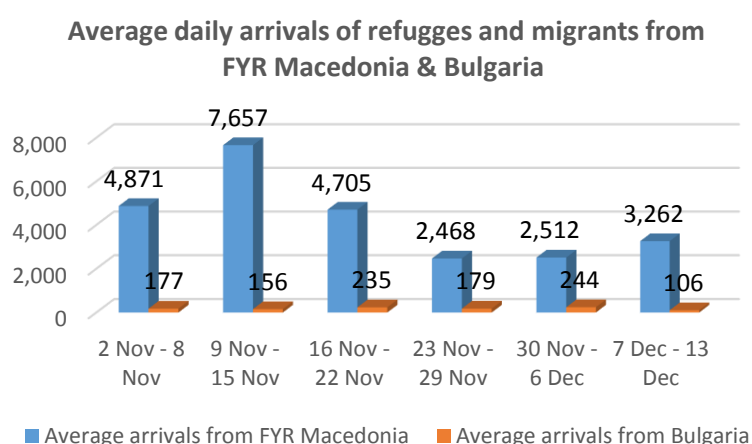
Serbia is situated along the preferred route through the Western Balkans for refugees originating from the Middle East and Asia, aiming to seek asylum in Europe. UNHCR estimated that at any given time some 5,000 refugees were on Serbian territory in the reporting period. During this week, the weather turned increasingly cold but generally dry.

The number of arrivals into Serbia from Bulgaria decreased, with an average of 105 asylum-seekers arriving daily across the entire stretch of this border. 25-120 asylum-seekers were observed resting in Belgrade at any one time.

The practice of denying entry to new arrivals originating from countries other than Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq continued throughout the region. Stranded asylum-seekers are at high risk to fall prey to smugglers and take illegal routes to the European Union instead. UNHCR and partners continued to advocate for protection-sensitive management of migration, and for the stranded asylum-seekers (up to 20 daily in total at entry and exit points) to be allowed access to asylum procedures. The SCRM continued to host them in the refugee aid points (RAP) and asylum centres, where they had access to humanitarian assistance.

UNHCR, SCRM, Police, the Health Centre, Red Cross, UNICEF, Caritas, DRC, Natan and Remar assisted asylum seekers 24/7 at the Preševo Reception Centre (RC). UNFPA, ADRA and Care international were present during the day. Police, IOM, the Health Centre and Philanthropy assisted refugees and migrants 24/7 at Miratovac refugee aid point (RAP) and, for security reasons, UNHCR, DRC and MSF provided assistance until 11 pm only. Humedica and MSF were present in the Miratovac village from 07 am to 11 pm.

UNHCR, HCIT, WAHA, and SCRM were present 24/7 at the Šid train station. SCRM, Police, APC, Red Cross, UNHCR, MSF, BCM, CRS/Divac Foundation, NSHC and Czech Volunteers were assisting asylum seekers 24/7, whereas World Vision, INTERSOS, TDH, and OM were present during the day at Adaševci RAP.



Achievements



Achievements and Impact

- In Preševo and Šid, UNHCR, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), IOM and Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT) assisted around 800 persons with special needs (PSNs) and reunited at least 15 families.
- IOM, DRC and UNHCR continued to transport up to 2,600 refugees and migrants daily from Miratovac to Preševo Reception Centre (RC).
- UNHCR identified at least 3 UASCs and alerted UNHCR Croatia for follow up on their side.
- UNICEF continued to support child-friendly spaces operating in Preševo (operated in partnership with the Danish Refugee Council) and in Adaševci refugee aid point (operated in partnership with World Vision). In both spaces, UNICEF supports the Centre of Social Work to deploy additional social workers to identify and respond to the needs of vulnerable children and families. 1292 children and their mothers attended the Child Friendly Space (CFS) and mother and baby corner (MBC) in Adaševci. At the CFS, children had access to recreational activities, information about their rights and psychological support. Mothers received dignity kits, baby kits, and basic information on breastfeeding and child rights.



Many refugee and migrant children and their families are facing harsh weather conditions. Thanks to the generous support from the European Union's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO), they can keep warm in the UNICEF-supported child-friendly space in Preševo and receive warm winter clothes which will help them to weather the upcoming winter, Photo@UNICEF/UN03025/Gilbertson VII

- World Vision (WV) assisted with temporary separated cases in Adaševci. 100% of cases of temporary separation in Adaševci were reunified within 30 minutes of identification.
- Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre (NSHC) and Terre des Hommes (TDH) provided recreational outreach activities in Adaševci to 872 children and 271 parents.
- Czech volunteer team/People in Need supported the work of World Vision at the child-friendly space in Adaševci and had 15 volunteers present in Šid.
- DRC translators were active in Adaševci, assisting the Protection Officers, and assisting the refugees and migrants referred to other organisations, medical doctors, etc.
- UNICEF, through the services provided in the child-friendly spaces, supported 1,412 children and 745 mothers in the period of 7-13 December.
- IOM mobile team deployed to support Border police in Miratovac green border entry point assisted more than 20,000 refugees and migrants upon arrival by providing necessary information and referral towards the registration center in Preševo. The team also assisted vulnerable families and individuals with transportation assistance from the Miratovac RAP to bus transportation. The average number of assisted migrants was 3,700. Out of this number approx. 1,200 were children and approx. 450 were the elderly, the disabled, etc.
- In the Preševo registration center, IOM mobile team engaged in assisting the work of police in preparatory activities for the registration of refugees and migrants (filling in the questionnaires prior to registration) and assisted approx. 16,000 asylum-seekers.
- Mercy Corps finalized setting up an information and translation centre at Šid train station with three full-time field staff (including 2 translators). The team provided information and translation services, and was coordinating with UNHCR and SCRМ finalization of material to be distributed as printed or visual/TV information.
- In Šid, Mercy Corps provided WiFi and charging unit at the SCRМ temporary shelter (so-called Grey house) and the train station platform in Šid. Number of users was 250-350 per day.

- With its 2 translators, Mercy Corps team in Preševo continued provision of translation and information and began providing protection assistance to vulnerable groups along their route from Tabanovce to Preševo. Number of refugees assisted was over 2500.
At Šid train station, HCIT provided legal aid and protection information, enabled fast tracking of persons with special needs (PSNs), referrals to medical staff, assisted the Serbian Police in determination of identity and nationality of refugees and migrants, conducted interviews with 13 persons of concern who shared important information on transit and treatment during transit, and reunified one refugee family. 106 cases were referred to WAHA and Šid doctors and one person was referred to Sremska Mitrovica Hospital and HCIT donated medicine for his condition (varicella) that was not otherwise available. HCIT provided interpretation during examinations and treatment. 2890 persons of concern were provided with protection information and assisted during boarding and transit by HCIT.
- UNHCR continued conducting Participatory Assessments with asylum-seekers in Adaševci and Šid RAP, focusing on protection and shelter issues along the journey .
- SOS Children's Villages Serbia's IT spot in Adaševci (charger units and Wi-Fi internet) had between 500 users per day on average.
- ADRA was involved in the following 24/7 protection-related activities in Preševo, Miratovac and Bujanovac: communication, translation (10 translators) and assistance to public officers, identification of hidden basic needs, medical assistance, monitoring of unaccompanied minors and other persons with special needs, referral to the protection mechanism and assisting UNICEF, social care institutions and other agencies.
- INTERSOS provided Wi-Fi and charging services, as well as mobile phones for urgent cases at Adaševci RAP to up to 1000 beneficiaries per day.
- Balkan Center for Migration (BCM)/Catholic Relief Service (CRS) interpreters assisted 15,576 refugees who arrived to Šid.
- Through activities of CFS in Belgrade, Foundation SOS Children's Villages supported 26 children and 85 adults and through field work in Belgrade supported 11 children and 178 adults (total 37 children and 263 adults). CFS team gave out 66 packs of biscuits and 49 hygiene packages and provided 480 services for refugees.
- The Asylum Info Centre in Belgrade, supported by ADRA, Klikaktiv, Savski Venac municipality and UNHCR, as well as Belgrade Center for Human Rights (BCHR) continued providing information, referrals, aid, counselling and Internet access to refugees in Belgrade.
- SCRМ continued to provide free shuttle bus service to the asylum centre in Krnjača for refugees in Belgrade region to shelter from the elements.
- Info park B92 provided information in English and Farsi at Dimitrovgrad RAP.
- UNHCR's partners Amity and Sigma Plus had mobile teams consisting of social workers and psychologists present in Negotin, Zaječar, Dimitrovgrad, Pirot and Knjaževac, who reported daily on the influx of refugees in these municipalities, their needs as well as the needs of the local communities and services provided. They had an Arabic-speaking team member in Zaječar and mobile teams used services of locally recruited translators.



Šid - UNHCR staff talking with Afghan minors in the RAP,
Photo ©UNHCR

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- WV noted a need for services catered to children above 12 years of age at Adaševci RAP.
- Groups of refugees continued to arrive to Serbia without any means left to continue their travel through Serbia and were approaching the authorities the UNHCR and the NGOs for assistance.
- Asylum-seekers complained about the conditions of the road on the Serbia-fYR Macedonia border.
- No translators were available in the Šid RAP clinic during the midnight shift.

Education

Achievements and Impact

- In the Banja Koviljača, Krnjača, Bogovađa and Krnjača asylum centres, UNHCR funded DRC activities for children, including a kindergarten supervised by qualified care-givers, and English and Serbian language lessons three times per week to improve their chances of integration within the community.
- The Bogovađa asylum centre conducted sewing classes for women and mothers who are protégés of this centre. This activity boosted refugees' psychological well-being and self-confidence, and empowered them with transferable skills. Products include bed sheets used in other asylum centres and the One-Stop Centre in Preševo.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- Notwithstanding the above-mentioned efforts, refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection continued to face challenges of integration and education opportunities.



Health

Achievements and Impact

- On 10 and 11 December, UNFPA delivered mobile clinics to health centres (HC) in Šid and Vranje. Medical equipment such as gynaecological examination tables, ultrasounds, electrocardiographs and blood pressure apparatus were delivered to HC in Preševo, Dimitrovgrad, Bosilegrad, Šid, Vranje and Belgrade, as per identified needs and delivery criteria agreed with MoH. Keys for the mobile clinic in Šid were cordially awarded on 11 December to the Director of HC Šid, Dr Krsto Kureš, by Dr Vesna Knjeginjić, Assistant Minister of Health, Dr Doina Bologna, UNFPA Country Director for Serbia, and Ms. Irena Vojackova-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia.



Šid -Health Center in Šid received a mobile clinic donated by UNFPA, Photo@UNFPA

- 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.
- EHO medical team worked three times per week in shifts in the two infirmaries at Adaševci motel.
- International Medical Corps/International Aid Network medical mobile unit provided medical first aid to 316 and psychological first aid (PFA) to 225 refugees at the train station in Šid during day shifts.
- NSHC and TDH provided 279 refugees and migrants with psychological first aid at Adaševci.
- Caritas was providing medicaments and vitamins in the amount of 300 € per month, at the request of the Health Centre Dimitrovgrad.
- At the request of medical doctors operating at Preševo

RC, Caritas provided medicaments and vitamins (including Adrenalin injections).

- UNFPA distributed information/education/communication materials on reproductive health in crisis areas in cooperation with DRC, UNHCR and UNICEF. Leaflets on complications in pregnancy, antenatal and postnatal care, developed jointly with MoH, were available in Serbian, English, Arabic, Farsi and Urdu in Preševo and Belgrade.
- The medical clinics supported by UNHCR continued to work 24/7 in Miratovac RAP and Preševo RC. Medical team in Preševo had over 800 interventions, and asylum-seekers also used the medical services of MSF/Humedica/Natan outside the RC gates.

- UNHCR continuously supplied medical teams in Preševo, Miratovac and Belgrade and asylum centre in Krnjača with medication and medical supplies.
- MSF provided medical assistance at their camper in Adaševci to up to 300 refugees and migrants daily. BCM/CRS medical team and Šid Health Centre provided medical assistance from the main lobby of Adaševci Motel to 614 patients including provision of interpretation services to doctors.
- WAHA provided medical care at Šid train station 24/7, supported by day by the Šid Health Centre team.
- UNHCR/DRC doctors continued their presence in Svetonikoljski park in Belgrade and provided medical assistance to refugees and migrants daily 07-19hrs.
- WAHA medical team in Dimitrovgrad had up to 100 interventions daily.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NSTR



Food Security and Nutrition

Achievements and Impact

- Distribution of up to 600 UNHCR-funded food rations by the Red Cross continued daily at Preševo Centre.
- UNICEF-supported mother-and-baby spaces, where lactating mothers can continue to breastfeed and receive necessary information on breastfeeding, continued to be operational in Preševo (operating 24/7 in partnership with DRC), and in Adaševci (operating in partnership with World Vision).
- UNICEF continued to support the deployment of accredited nurses to support breastfeeding mothers and counsel them on infant feeding in Preševo. Mothers can use these spaces to take care of their babies, access necessary hygiene items, and ensure their children above 6 months old receive age appropriate food.
- UNICEF supported 726 babies and 279 mothers in mother-and-baby spaces between 7 and 13 December.
- UNICEF organised a training, on December 10 and 11, for all frontline nurses, cultural mediators and support staff working in the mother-and-baby space in Preševo.
- World Vision (WV) distributed 4578 food packages and hygiene items (tooth brush, tooth paste, wet wipes, dry tissues) in Adaševci and at Šid train station.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) partnered with Remar in running a soup and tea kitchen in Adaševci 24/7.
- NSHC and CARE provided 1,750 food packages daily at Adaševci. During the night shifts, NSHC and International Rescue Committee (IRC) provided food (2,800 sandwiches and 2,800 fruit juices) to refugees who arrived to Adaševci.
- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide food parcels daily in Preševo, Adaševci and Belgrade, based on the needs. During this week Caritas provided more than 5,300 food parcels. Caritas was also providing hot tea and soup portions at Preševo RC, together with the local organization “Life Aid” from Vranje. 7,000 portions of soup and 2,100 tea cups were distributed.
- Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) distributed food parcels in Šid RAP.
- UNHCR, HCIT and EHO distributed 4,973 bottles of water, 1,230 WFP high-energy biscuits (HEBs) and 28 kgs of biscuits in Preševo and Šid.



Šid - Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) staff distributing food, Photo@UNHCR



Preševo - Winterized REMAR tent where refugees can warm up with soup and tea, Photo ©UNHCR

- Red Cross distributed food, water and clothes at all border towns with Bulgaria used by refugees for entry into Serbia.
- ADRA continued to provide, through local Red Cross, 1,000 food and hygiene packages daily, for refugees arriving from Bulgaria to Negotin.
- Red Cross and Miksalište distributed food and clothes/shoes to refugees in Belgrade.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- WV noted a lack of supplementary food for children under 2 years of age at Adaševci RAP.

Water and Sanitation

Achievements and Impact

- UNICEF's expert on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene was deployed to assess the situation in Šid, Principovac and Adaševci.
- NSHC and CARE provided and set up 500m² of new floor in the Adaševci motel, replacing the old dusty carpet.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) were cleaning the motel/petrol station in Adaševci during the afternoon shift and were on garbage duty. They were also cleaning inside the motel, especially the old hotel kitchen.
- Czech volunteer team/People in Need helped MSF in constructing bathrooms at Adaševci RAP.
- Caritas/CRS bathroom container with showers, located in Miksalište in Belgrade, was used to provide refugees a chance of taking a free shower during their travel.
- Czech volunteers were cleaning the site at Adaševci.
- UNHCR was providing for the rental and cleaning services of mobile toilets at Miratovac RAP and Preševo RC.
- UNDP continued to rent a garbage truck on behalf of the Preševo municipality from Vranje PUC, which served to keep Miratovac and Preševo litter-free.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- UNHCR, SCRM, Sremska Mitrovica Bureau for Public health, management of the Railway Station and the manager of "Standard" company met to discuss the poor sanitary condition of the railway tracks where the trains for refugees arrive in Šid. SCRM suggested that four additional workers are to be hired to clean the railway tracks.

Shelter and NFIs

Achievements and Impact

- Relocation of Miratovac RAP and necessary works were almost finalized. The RAP is expected to be operational as of 15 December. IOM installed 29 containers (16 containers as rest point area for migrants, 6 containers for vulnerable refugees and migrants, 4 for border police staff, 1 for storage of humanitarian aid items, 1 container for IOM and 1 for UNICEF). There are also UNHCR, DRC, MSF, REMAR containers installed. The capacity of the camp is 300-500 refugees and migrants.

- UNHCR gave six electrical heaters to IOM to be used in the six blue tents in Miratovac RAP. Pellet heating system in the registration hall at the RC and the main sleeping hall in the Tobacco factory in Preševo was completed (funded by Norwegian Embassy). Winterization of the rub halls at the RC is ongoing, with diesel heating system installed in one, and installation work ongoing in the other rub halls.
- One of the MSF rub halls in Šid RAP was furnished with 200 benches donated by UNHCR.
- REMAR winterized a large tent for serving hot tea/soup and changing clothes in Preševo.
- UNHCR's partner Vizija paved the gravel area surrounding the Red Cross container and the latrines in Adaševci RAP, and finished the fencing of the rub hall area at the back of Adaševci RAP.
- REMAR was working on the construction of their tent, to serve as tea and hot meal distribution point next to the bus assembly area at Adaševci RAP. Two out of four MSF rub halls were completed and made ready for use.
- Operation Mobilization (OM) were assisting MSF in setting up the tents (construction, electrical installation, insulation, painting etc.) at Šid Train station and Adaševci. OM partnered with Remar in setting up and running a heated tent, and provided two interpreters.



Preševo - Preparation of the pre-registration roofed area,
Photo ©UNHCR

- NSHC and TDH distributed 2,140 winter and hygienic items to 1,500 beneficiaries, mainly children and mothers at Adaševci RAP.

- Mobile Team of SOS Children's Villages in Adaševci provided 200 hygiene packages, 684 pair of socks, 60 blankets for babies and 600 packs of biscuits.

- UNFPA distribution of dignity items in cooperation with DRC was ongoing in Preševo as per local needs.

- As part of its gender-based violence prevention and response activities, UNFPA initiated procurement of whistles and torches to be delivered in Preševo.

- UNICEF, through its partners DRC, HCIT and World Vision, distributed the following items in Preševo and Šid: 1,209 pairs of winter socks, 383 baby changing mats, 82 baby

carriers, 404 baby blanket, 427 pairs of winter shoes/boots, 220 overall outerwear for babies, 517 winter jackets, 791 thermal underwear sets, 1,432 sets of hats, scarves and gloves, 59 thermal cover baby sets and 31 pairs of women's tights.

- Caritas continued, in cooperation with the Red Cross, to provide hygiene packs for women and babies daily in Preševo, Belgrade, Bosilegrad and Adaševci. During this week Caritas distributed 1,230 hygiene packs for women and 394 baby hygiene packages. 513 fleece jackets, 668 rain jackets, 640 winter hats, 1,214 pairs of socks and 498 winter shoes for children and adults were distributed by Caritas in Preševo, Adaševci, Belgrade, Bosilegrad and Zaječar.
- With funding provided by Mercy Corps, Divac Foundation's mobile team continued food and clothes distribution and provision of information in Šid and Dimitrovgrad, from which 1400 refugees benefited over the past week.
- UNHCR distributed 6 wheelchairs in Preševo and Šid.
- UNHCR provided two mind games sets for adults and four TV sets to SCRМ for the waiting area at Adaševci RAP.
- UNHCR and partners DRC and HCIT distributed 877 blankets, 460 jackets, 352 pairs of footwear, 63 hygiene gels, 390 bags and 307 pairs of socks in Preševo and Šid.
- DRC distributed winter clothes in Miratovac, Dimitrovgrad and Adaševci, as well as in Šid RAP on a needs basis.
- Czech volunteer team/People in Need distributed hygiene items (diapers, hygiene pads for women, xl pads for older people, baby cream, wet wipes, tooth paste, tooth brushes) and winter clothes (socks, gloves, hats, jackets, etc. for children and adults) in Adaševci. The Czech team also helped unloading the truck with blankets for UNHCR at Šid train station.
- Asylum Info Centre in Belgrade distributed clothes and hygienic packages.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- More children socks were needed in Preševo and more winter clothes and shoes at the border with Bulgaria.

- In Dimitrovgrad, the waiting areas were found to be inadequate, as while the containers were heated, they were full of cigarette smoke from male refugees, while women and children sheltered at a former garage with no heating and no furniture. UNHCR is following up to ensure beds and heating get installed in this former garage, while Save the Children and UNICEF are considering arranging a CFS there.



Support to local communities

Achievements and Impact

- UNDP initiated a survey on the impact of the crisis on the local communities in the migration-affected municipalities in Serbia, with a view to enabling humanitarian and development partners to better target their support in the ongoing crisis.

Identified Needs and Remaining Gaps

- NTR

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. 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), which meet on a fortnightly basis. RTG meeting took place on 11 December.
- Field coordination group meetings take place every second day in Preševo (chaired by UNHCR) and Šid (chaired by SCRM).
- **Refugee Protection Working Group (RPWG)**, co-chaired by the UNHCR and the MoL, currently makes for the key coordination mechanism for agencies/NGOs operational in the country, as well as a source of information for donors/diplomatic missions who also attend its meetings largely as observers. RPWG has over 150 members, and is constantly growing. 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). The RPWG last met on 3 December in Belgrade.
- A **Partners' Briefing** where the UNHCR, UNRC, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & MoL/Chair of Government WG on Mixed Migration update the diplomatic corps/donors and NGOs on the current refugee situation and the response of the UN agencies in the previous period, took place on 9 November. Partners Briefing takes place every first week of the month and the last meeting took place on 9 December.
- The **Serbian European Integration Office (SEIO)** hosts **Donor Coordination Meetings** every first week of the month. The last Donor Coordination Meeting took place on 9 November in Belgrade.

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