

# The situation at the border crossings Gevgelija and Kumanovo

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*Period: 06.02.2017– 12.02.2017*

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## **Gevgelija**

### *Available facilities and conditions*

The number of refugees in the camp amounted to 68 in the course of this week.

There have been no significant changes in the infrastructure and conditions in the camp.

The refugees were provided with a possibility for a visit to a hair-stylist and a dentist.

Towards the end of the week, there was a visit by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Sebastian Kurtz, accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of RM, Nikola Poposki. The official representatives did not visit the camp, but the border elevation 59, on the borderline with Greece.

### *Institutional treatment*

At the beginning of the week, one person from the camp was transported to Greece upon expressing a request.

On 07.02.2017, one person from Syria arrived in the camp with a request to be transported to Greece. Upon completion of the check-up by the police, the person was transported to Greece. On the next day, two refugees originating from Algeria were brought to the camp. The Police caught them hidden in a cargo train, without having any documents for personal identification. After they were provided with humanitarian aid by the Red Cross, they were soon deported to Greece.

There were announcements that 14 refugees from the camp who had already started the procedure and their asylum requests were being considered, will be transported to the Shelter Center for Asylum Seekers – Vizbegovo in the course of the upcoming week. After this announcement, some of the refugees gave up on their asylum requests, stating that they would like to be sent back to Greece instead.

On 12.02.2017, the police caught six refugees of various origin – coming from Algeria, Libya and Tunisia, on a cargo train from Greece. They did not possess documents for personal identification, but only documents that they had been registered in Greece. After the police had an informative talk with them, and they were provided with humanitarian and medical aid by the Red Cross, they were transported to Greek territory. In the course of the day, at the railway station in Gevgelija, a five-member family originating from Syria was brought to the camp, i.e. a mother of three juvenile children and her sister's child, i.e. her nephew. Due to the deteriorating health of one of the children, the family was accommodated and held in the camp. At the same time, 8 more refugees were brought, among whom one from Pakistan and 7 originating from Bangladesh, who were caught by the police in the course of the previous night, in the vicinity of Kavadarci. Immediately after this, another person was brought, who,

according to his statements, originated from Syria. After they were provided with medical and humanitarian aid, and after they were checked by the police, they were all transported to Greek territory.

## **Kumanovo**

### *Available facilities and conditions*

The number of refugees significantly declined in the course of the week, from 95 at the start, to 46 at the end of the week.

There have been no major changes to the camp infrastructure.

### *Institutional treatment*

New refugees of various origin, including Algeria and Morocco, arrive to the camp on daily-basis.

A larger group of refugees (50) which has been staying in the camp since the closing of the borders in March, 2016, were transported to Greece on the night between 8 and 9 February by bus, after they were informed by the representatives of the Ministry of Interior that a re-admission agreement was made with the Republic of Greece. According to the allegations, the procedure had started in August and was finally finished, whereby the refugees who possess documents for registration in Greece, will be sent back and shortlisted for relocation to the countries of the European Union.

The refugees were informed about the fact that they were about to be transported, during the night, around 11, when they were told to immediately pack their things as they were about the leave for Greece. The reason why the refugees were transported at midnight without being given prior notification and enough time to pack, is unclear. In the early-morning hours, the refugees arrived at the border crossing "Bogorodica" and crossed the border shortly after, whereby they were accommodated in a shelter camp in Thessaloniki.

The refugees who stayed in the camp are upset and uncertain about their situation. In the oncoming days, several refugees who arrived to the camp from outside, were not given access.

## **The situation at the Shelter Center in the Republic of Macedonia**

The number of refugees accommodated in the Shelter Centers for asylum seekers is not available.

## **Irregular migration**

In the course of this period, the Ministry of Interior has not registered any criminal or legal event related to refugees or smuggling in its bulletins.