

The situation at the border crossings Gevgelija and Kumanovo

Period: 20.02.2017– 05.03.2017

Gevgelija

Available facilities and conditions

At the very start of the week the number of refugees in the camp dropped from 54 to 49, after a five-member family was transported to Greece at their own request.

Due to a decline in the number of refugees in the camp, the number of toilets in use has also dropped.

The children from the camp, accompanied by the organizations and institutions from the camp, are being taken on one-day excursions outside the camp, in the countryside surrounding Gevgelija.

On 23.02.2017, a delegation of the International Organization for Migration paid a visit to the camp, in order to get acquainted with the situation.

The women in the camp are provided with the possibility of regular gynecological check-ups.

Institutional treatment

Apart for the five-member family who left the camp at the start of this week, a large number of the remaining families have also expressed intent to leave the camp and be transported to Greece. Their departure has been prolonged only due to the weather conditions.

In the course of these two weeks only one refugee originating from Pakistan was caught in an attempt to cross the border at the border crossing Bogorodica, on foot. According to this statement, this was his first attempt to cross the border. After he was questioned and registered by the police, and offered medical and humanitarian help, he was immediately transported to Greek territory. It is symptomatic that recently this was the only case of this kind.

Kumanovo

Available facilities and conditions

In the course of these two weeks, the number of refugees oscillated between 45 and 55. The exact number in the camp remains unknown due to the unregistered refugees present in the camp at the moment, and due to the frequent departures and arrivals of refugees.

There is a large number of refugees moving around the camp, originating from Algeria, Morocco and Pakistan. Although they sporadically make attempts to enter the camp, they are often prevented from doing so, apart from cases of emergency, when they need medical aid.

The food distributed to the refugees is relatively bad. They are most often given canned food and meagre meals.

Institutional treatment

There are regular coordinating meetings in the camp between the competent institutions and the non-governmental organizations working in the camp. Due to the great stirring of new refugees who enter the camp during nighttime, an increased police patrol is recommended.

The refugees who are accommodated in the camp are depressed, which poses a concern.

A refugee coming from outside the camp with an injury, i.e. being bitten by a dog, was allowed to enter the camp and was provided with medical aid.

The situation at the Shelter Centers in the Republic of Macedonia

The number of refugees in the Shelter Centers is not available.

Irregular migration

In the course of these two weeks, the Ministry of Interior registered several events related to migrant-smuggling.

The first one took place on 25.02.2017, on the motorway Gevgelija-Skopje, where 15 refugees, including children, originating from Iraq, Syria and Pakistan were caught up in a cargo vehicle with Veles registration plates. The vehicle was stopped in the vicinity of the village of Udovo, for moving at a very high speed, whereby the driver immediately fled. The refugees were interviewed by police officers whereby their whereabouts remain unknown.

The Ministry of Interior reports that criminal charges have been filed against a person from Skopje, suspected of committing the crime of “migrant smuggling”, who was caught transporting 6 refugees originating from Syria and Pakistan from Greece to the border with the Republic of Serbia on 20.02.2017. The person was caught in Strumica, after he caused an accident, whereby all the passengers were taken to the Strumica Medical Center.

On 03.03.2017, while checking a vehicle driving on the motorway Gevgelija – Skopje, 16 refugees were caught, and the driver was detained on grounds of reasonable suspicion for committing the crime of “migrant smuggling” after an arrest warrant was previously issued for him. On the same day, on the regional road Valandovo – Udovo, when stopping a vehicle with Skopje registration plates, two people were apprehended, the driver and front passenger, on grounds of reasonable suspicion of committing the crime of migrant smuggling.