

Macedonian Young Lawyers Association



FIELD REPORT 2017

February

FIELD REPORT 2017

February



Macedonian Young Lawyers Association

One big development marked the month of February. Namely 49 persons were deported from the Transit Center Tabanovce to Greece. No new practices occurred in the Transit Center Vinograd, while some new developments were registered in the Transit Center Tabanovce, especially concerning the number of pushed back refugees from Serbia. In both of the transit centers there were no new asylum application registered and no new arrivals happened during the month of February.

TC Tabanovce

The biggest concern in the camp during the month of February was the official return of 49 refugees who had been residing in TC Tabanovce for 11 months. On 09.02.2016 early in the morning 49 refugees were taken away from TC Tabanovce by bus to the official border crossing with Greece, Bogorodica/Evzoni. This action was done in coordination with the Macedonian and the Greek authorities based on the EU-MK readmission agreement.

During the reporting period 20 refugees were informed about the asylum procedure.

The refugees previously were not informed that they are going to be returned in Greece. Few hours before the return the officials gave them instruction to prepare for a return to Greece from where afterwards they will be taken to Germany. There were no asylum seekers among this group.

There were two newborn children among the refugees for whom MYLA initiated a birth registration procedure, however at the time the procedure was still ongoing. Since the refugees are no longer in Macedonia the procedure had to be stopped and the children's births will remain unregistered.

The official number of refugees who are staying in TC Tabanovce in February was 46, of which, only 7 are women. The number of refugees pushed back from Serbia during this months decreased in comparison to previ-

ous months. The NGOs and international organization that monitor the hotspots for irregular border crossings,

There are 4 unaccompanied and separated children staying in the transit center in Tabanovce, and the authorities have appointed guardians to all of them.



TC Tabanovce in February

source: MYLA

unofficially informed us that the total number of pushed back refugees from Serbia is around 50 during February. Most of them were spotted staying in the houses in the border villages Lojane and Vaksince.

On average at least 100 persons, between refugees that were pushed back from Serbia and refugees trying to transit through Macedonia were spotted in the villages near the border with Serbia, including vulnerable groups of individuals among them.

The number of refugees entering from Greece and reaching the transit center was approximately 50 this month. However this number relates only to persons that tried to enter the center or sought some type of assistance.

The real number of persons that manage to transit through Macedonia without detection must be higher since in Serbia, according to organizations working in the field, over 200 persons arrive on a daily basis.

The transit center Tabanovce remains closed to anyone except families and vulnerable group and even for them it is only for few hours in order to rest and get some food. During February the officials denied entrance in the center to everyone that reached the camp, except one person from Iraq due to his bad medical condition. Because of this the number of refugees that were staying in the vicinities of the center, around the railway station, increased in comparison to January.

15 refugees that were staying outside the center were taken away from the officials in an unknown direction.



TC Vinojug in February

source: MYLA

TC Vinojug

The situation in TC Vinojug in February continued to be relatively the same as in the previous months. During this month the tendency of leaving TC Vinojug continued. The refugees are not satisfied with the conditions in the camp and they have intention to apply for the process of relocation in Greece.

These are the main reasons of their leaving. During February, in total 20 persons left for Greece, so, the number of persons accommodated in TC Vinojug varied between 69 and 49 persons.

On February 2nd 2017, 14 asylum seekers from Syria and Iran who submitted asylum claims in January were

taken to the police station in Gevgelija where they were fingerprinted and photographed. On February 10th, 8 asylum seekers from Iran were transferred to the Reception Center for Asylum Seekers in Vizbegovo, while the asylum seekers from Syria withdrew their asylum claims. They informed our field lawyers that the main reason for that was the return of the refugees from the transit center Tabanovce to Greece.

In terms of legal counsel, majority of the people that were offered legal aid and counseling in the Transit Center Vinojug were persons that were caught by the Macedonian Police in an attempt to enter Macedonia irregularly and were taken back to the transit center to be profiled and registered by the Police.

During this month, MYLA assisted the registration of two newborn babies. One woman from Syria and one woman from Iraq were transferred to the registry office for newborns in Skopje where they successfully registered their newborn babies and were issued birth certificates.

In total **55** persons from Syria, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Morocco, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo have been pushed back to Greece during February, after they were questioned by the police. MYLA's field lawyers gave them the necessary information, mostly on questions regarding the asylum procedure in Macedonia, and the rights and obligations of asylum seekers and persons with recognized status in the country.

All of the push backs are done unofficially to points where there are no Greek police patrols. The Ministry of Interior continued with the registering of all profiled refugees by taking their personal data and fingerprinting them

Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) is an independent, non-partisan, non-governmental professional organization which provides legal aid and strategically litigates to protect human rights. By using the knowledge and innovative capacities of young lawyers, MYLA promotes the rule of law and influences policy through research and advocacy. MYLA strives for a society in which the rule of law is established and people proactively strive for the respect of their human rights.

MYLA is the only organization in the Republic of Macedonia that provides free legal aid and represents asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons and other persons of concern in procedures related to asylum, legal residence and other social rights.

MYLA's work has been generously supported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Oxfam.

CONTACT US

Address:
Donbas 14 1-6
1000 Skopje, Macedonia

Telephone:
+389 2 3220 870

Email:
contact@myla.org.mk

Visit us on our website
www.myla.org.mk



Macedonian Young Lawyers Association

