

FIELD REPORT 2017

March



Macedonian Young Lawyers Association

In March the biggest development was the departing of a large group of refugees from TC Vinojug hoping to find better life in Greece. While in TC Tabanovce month there were some minor developments but no changes in the practices of the institutions. The push backs continued this month as well and the people in concern were mostly single men and families. While some persons were allowed to be accommodated in TC Vinojug due to their vulnerability, no new refugees were allowed in TC Tabanovce.

TC Tabanovce

During the reporting period the push backs from Serbia continued, the number increased in comparison to previous months. The NGOs that monitor the hotspots for illegal border crossing, unofficially informed us that the total number of refugees pushed back from Serbia is 105 people, all staying in the villages Lojane and Vaksince.

The number of refugees entering irregularly from Greece and reaching the northern border during March was approximately 44 people. However they were not allowed to enter in TC Tabanovce since still no one is allowed except vulnerable groups who are allowed entrance only for few hours to be provided with food and medical care.

Since the institutions are not allowing refugees to enter in the

The official number of refugees who are staying in TC Tabanovce in March was 30.

camp the number of people that were staying in the vicinities of the railway station and tracks continued to increase.

MYLA's lawyer interviewed 10 persons who were not allowed to enter the camp and informed them about the asylum procedure in Macedonia but all of them were interested in continuing their journey rather than seeking asylum in Macedonia. 15 refugees that were staying in the camp voluntarily left the camp and headed for Greece where they will try to find a way into Europe through the relocation program.

There are 4 new unaccompanied and separated children who

During the reporting period 15 refugees/migrants were informed about the asylum procedure.

arrived in TC Tabanovce during March and the officials appointed a guardian for all of them. The total number of unaccompanied and separated children accommodated in TC Tabanovce was 9 during the months, six of them left the camp in an unknown direction but after only two days three of them returned to the camp.

At the end of the reporting period 6 unaccompanied minors were residing in the camp.

TC Vinojug

During March the situation in TC Vinojug changed drastically. Most of the refugees, who were accommodated in TC Vinojug, decided to leave the camp trying to find better life conditions in Greece. At the beginning of the month there were 49 persons that were accommodated in TC Vinojug, however by the end of the month only 14 persons were left in the hotel and this is mainly because they have begun the procedure of family reunification.

On March 8th two women (one from Syria and one from Iraq) who during February were transferred to Skopje to register the births of their newborn babies received the birth certificates issued by the Birth Registry Office in Skopje. MYLA assisted in obtaining a birth certificate for the newborn babies.

In terms of legal counsel, majority of the people that were offered legal aid and counseling in TC Vinojug were persons that were caught by the Macedonian Police in an attempt to enter Macedonia irregularly and were taken back to the camp site to be questioned/profiled and later on pushed back to Greece.

In total 90 persons from Syria, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Palestine, Pakistan, Algeria and Libya have been pushed back to Greece during March. MYLA's field lawyers gave them the necessary information, mostly on questions regarding the asylum procedure in Macedonia, social security in Macedonia, possibility for finding job, information regarding the conditions for accommodation in the reception center for asylum seekers in Vizbegovo, integration process in Macedonia and other information.

All of the push backs are done unofficially to places/points where there are no Greek police patrols. The Ministry of Interior continued with the registration of the refugees by taking the personal data and fingerprints of the refugees who are caught in an attempt to enter Macedonia irregularly.

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.

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