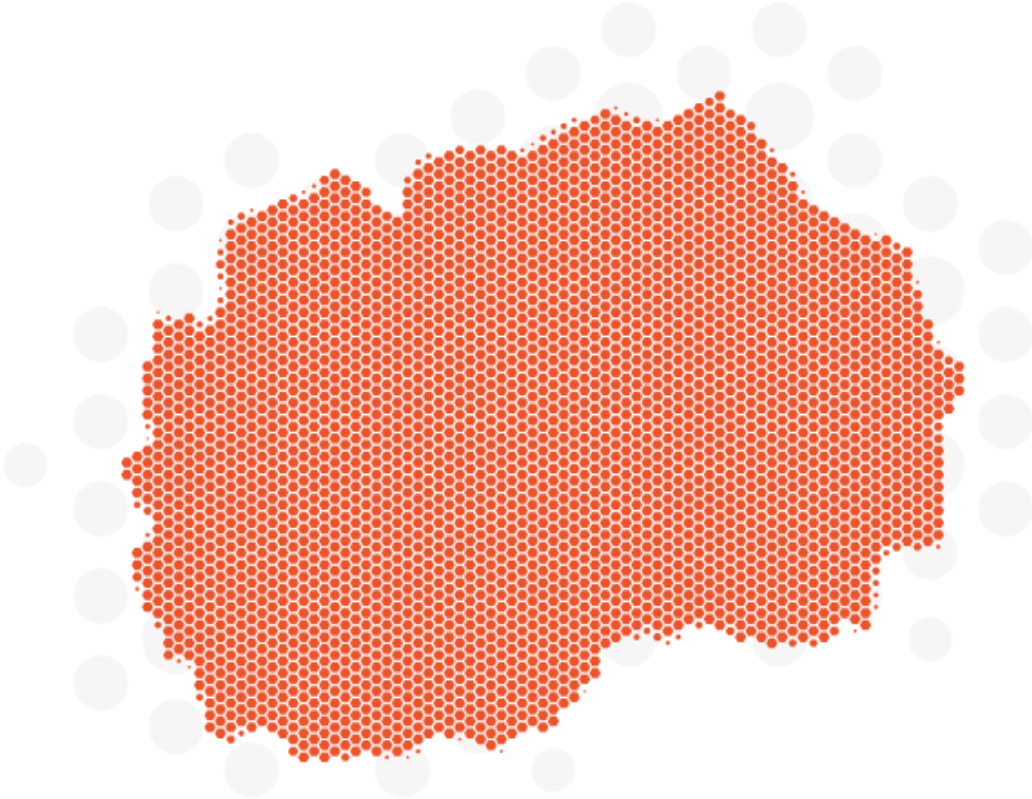


FIELD REPORT 2023



TC VINOJUG

ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES AND CONDITIONS

TC Vinojug has accommodation capacity for 90 persons in containers. In the center there are also three raphols, but they are not used for long-term accommodation. The center has toilets and showers (for men and women separately). In TC Vinojug three meals a day are provided for each person on the move. In TC Vinojug, persons on the move have the right to medical care (primary), free legal aid regarding the right to asylum, free internet, a small gym, a separate room - an activity room with a large TV monitor, as well as a separate children's corner, where children on the move they can play and study English and math.

MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTER

The status of the center and the persons accommodated in the center, as well as the actions of the competent authorities, were not legally regulated even in 2023, so the center functioned without a specific act or standard operating procedures for the method of reception and accommodation of persons in it, as well as their rights and the obligations.

The Crisis Management Center (CMC) is responsible for the operation and management of the center, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) is responsible for the accommodation of persons on the move in the center, while the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoI, Border Police) are responsible for the entry and exit of persons in the center as well as for photographing and fingerprinting upon initial entry into this center.

Representatives of state authorities, as well as non-governmental organizations and international organizations are present as well. Since April 19, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) has been present in TC Vinojug with three police officers with a mandate until January 2024 and two external collaborators who, with a mission mandate, change every one to two months and are from the migration services and asylum from FRONTEX member countries.

REGISTERED PERSONS ON THE MOVE IN 2023 IN THE CENTER

Throughout the year 2023, **the total number of registered persons on the move according to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy is 9424**, most of which come from Syria (4071), Morocco (2274), Afghanistan (712) and Pakistan (544). All persons on the move who were registered in the center were

also registered as accommodated persons. However, the actual number of accommodated persons is 1,377, and only 1/3 of them stayed for one day or longer. Most of the registered persons are men - 8402, while the number of registered adult women is 363. During the reporting period, a total of 659 children were registered in the center, of which 216 were unaccompanied. All unaccompanied children were appointed with a guardian from the Center for Social Affairs. The transit center functions as a closed type center, and for those reasons, the accommodated persons in the center do not have the opportunity to freely enter and leave it.

	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Unaccompanied children
January	28	8	3	5	3
February	9	2	0	1	2
March	40	9	3	3	0
April	46	7	7	5	2
May	881	20	4	3	55
June	1130	14	3	6	12
July	1411	68	66	18	20
August	1362	46	47	26	27
September	1402	73	81	38	47
October	1321	72	54	33	21
November	472	30	13	10	20
December	300	14	9	5	7
TOTAL	8402	363	290	153	216

During 2023, **persons on the move from 40 countries were registered in the center.**

	Total	Tunisia	26	Senegal	7
Congo	38	Mali	2	Indonesia	3
DRC Congo	172	Togo	3	Gwinea	15
Syria	4071	Sierra Leone	259	Turkiye	8
Afghanistan	712	Nigeria	8	Bangladesh	18
Morocco	2274	Libya	58	Gambia	10
India	20	Ghana	33	Cuba	11
Pakistan	544	Nepal	76	Somalia	10
Algeria	186	Sudan	9	Uganda	9
Iran	86	Iraq	247	Albania	2
Egypt	97	Yemen	5	China	28
Palestine	224	Cameroon	38	Lebanon	5

Uzbekistan	2	Burkina Faso	2	South Africa	1
France	1	Liberia	2		

ASYLUM SEEKERS IN TC VINOJUG IN 2023 AND ACCESS TO THE ASYLUM PROCEDURE

From the total number of persons in the center, **221 persons submitted a request for recognition of the right to asylum in the North Macedonia**. Of the total number of **221 asylum seekers, 106 were adult men, 45 adult women and 70 children (22 girls and 48 boys)**. Of the total of **70 children/asylum seekers, 12 were unaccompanied children/asylum seekers**.

In the majority of cases, there was a delay in registering the asylum request, explaining that the highest-ranking police officer was not present, or due to a lack of vehicles to transport the asylum seekers from the transit center to the Reception Center for asylum seekers, etc.

The MYLA field counsellor in the center gave a total of 306 legal advices regarding the asylum procedure and the right to apply for asylum in the North Macedonia.

ASYLUM SEEKERS IN 2023 IN THE CENTER (COUNTRY OF ORIGIN)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Algeria	/	/	/	/	/	/	2	/	/	2	1	3	8
Congo	/	/	/	9	9	9	/	/	/	3	14	13	57
Sierra Leone	/	/	/	/	/	9	/	/	7	6	4	1	27
Uganda	/	/	/	/	/	2	/	/	/	/	4	/	6
Togo	/	/	/	/	/	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	1
Iraq	/	/	/	3	/	/	5	/	/	/	/	/	8
Morocco	/	/	/	/	1	/	2	1	2	11	/	20	37
Iran	/	/	/	/	/	/	2	5	/	2	2	/	11
Afghanistan	/	/	/	/	3	/	5	1	7	/	8	2	26
Syria	/	/	/	/	5	/	/	3	1	3	5	1	18
Turkiye	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1	2
Tunisia	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1
Ghana	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1
Palestine	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	1
Egypt	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	1	/	1
Pakistan	/	16	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	16

Most asylum seekers come from Congo (57), Morocco (37) and Sierra Leone (27).

ACCESS TO TERRITORY

A total of 11,332 persons were caught by the Macedonian police were returned to Greece, without any formal legal procedure and respecting readmission agreements.

DETENTION

During 2023, **a total of 41 persons** on the move were detained in the center as witnesses in criminal proceedings against smugglers, **16 of whom were unaccompanied children**. This practice stopped in April when **FRONTEX** started working in the field.

TC TABANOVCE

ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES AND CONDITIONS

In TC Tabanovce there are 29 containers and 3 tents deployed. In the case of a possible overflow, a maximum of 280 to 300 people can be accommodated in this center. Currently, deployed tents are not used for long-term housing. The center has shared toilets (for men and women) and adequate shower cabins. TC Tabanovce does not carry out any activities for the accommodated persons. There is no children's corner provided, nor the children's requisites that would be used by the youngest categories of accommodated persons and would carry out some activities. Within the center basic health services are provided. Three meals a day are planned for each person, but most of the people on the move complained that the food was monotonous and it was not enough for them. The center provides free legal aid regarding the right to asylum by MYLA with the support of the UNHCR.

MANAGEMENT OF THE CENTER

The status of the center and the persons accommodated in this center, as well as the actions of the competent authorities, were not legally regulated even in 2023, so the center functioned without a

specific act or standard operating procedures for the method of reception and accommodation of the persons accommodated in it, as well as their rights and obligations.

The Crisis Management Center (CMC) is responsible for the operation and management of the center, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) is responsible for the accommodation of the person on the move in the center, while the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA, Border Police) is responsible for entry and exit of persons in the center as well as for photographing and fingerprinting upon initial entry into this center. Representatives of state authorities, as well as non-governmental and international organizations are also present.

REGISTERED PERSONS ON THE MOVE IN 2023 IN TC TABANOVCE

During the entire 2023, **the total number of people on the move accommodated in TC Tabanovce was 1247**, most of whom come from Syria (499), Afghanistan (145), Congo (134) and Morocco (116). Most of the accommodated persons are men (930), while the number of accommodated adult women is 129. During the reporting period, a total of 188 children were accommodated in the center, of which 52 were unaccompanied. All unaccompanied children were appointed with a legal guardian from the Center for Social Affairs. The transit center functions as an open-type center and for those reasons, the people on the move have the opportunity to enter and leave it freely, with constant control and regulation by the representatives of the Ministry of Interior. The field counsellor noticed three cases when 5 people were not allowed to enter TC Tabanovce, explaining that they had been accommodated in this center before.

	Men	Women	Boys	Girls	Unaccompanied children
January	39	6	6	0	0
February	25	18	12	0	0
March	93	10	18	0	0
April	71	15	5	4	2
May	47	6	2	0	6
June	75	3	3	5	4
July	108	10	10	4	7
August	110	2	9	0	15
September	56	21	11	12	2
October	134	15	10	5	3
November	68	15	4	5	3
December	104	8	5	6	10
TOTAL	930	129	95	41	52

During 2023, **persons on the move from 36 countries were accommodated in this center.**

	TOTAL				
Congo	134	Mali	1	Cameroon	5
Syria	499	Togo	6	Angola	4
Afghanistan	145	Sierra Leone	17	Senegal	1
Morocco	116	Nigeria	2	Indonesia	3
India	12	Benin	1	Dominican	1
Pakistan	55	Libya	8	Republic	
Algeria	23	Ghana	6	Gabon	1
Iran	12	Nepal	92	Guinea	1
Egypt	7	Sudan	3	Turkey	7
Palestine	48	Ethiopia	1	Bangladesh	2
Tunisia	6	New Guinea	1	Gambia	1
Ivory Coast	2	Iraq	18		
		Yemen	1		

ASYLUM SEEKERS IN TC VINOJUG IN 2023 AND ACCESS TO THE ASYLUM PROCEDURE

Out of the total number of persons on the move accommodated in the center, **only two persons submitted a request for recognition of the right to asylum in the Republic of North Macedonia (from Syria and Tunisia), which represents a small percentage compared to the total number of accommodated persons on the move. After submitting the request for asylum, these people were transferred to the Reception Center for Asylum Seekers in Vizbegovo.** Due to the small number of submitted asylum requests, no particular impediment was observed in accessing the asylum procedure.

MYLA field counsellor present in the center gave a total of 394 legal advice regarding the asylum procedure and the right to apply for asylum in the Republic of North Macedonia.

DETENTION

During 2023, a total of 64 persons on the move were detained in the center as witnesses in criminal proceedings against smugglers, of which 5 were unaccompanied children.

	Men	Women	Children	Unaccompanied children	TOTAL
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Syria	21	1	1	3	26
Morocco	6				6
Afganistan	1	2	1		4
Congo	4	5	3		12
Iraq	1	1	3	2	7
Senegal		1			1
Ghana		1			1
Nepal	4				4
Algeria	2				2
Libya	1				1
TOTAL	40	11	8	5	64

Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) is an independent, non-profit professional organization that provides legal aid and strategically litigates to protect human rights.

MYLA is an organization in North Macedonia that provides free legal aid and represents asylum seekers, people under international protection, and stateless persons in procedures related to asylum, legal residence, and other social rights.

MYLA field counselors are present daily in the two transit centers - Transit Center Tabanovce and Transit Center Vinojug and provide free legal aid and counseling on the right to asylum and the asylum procedure in North Macedonia.

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