



Situation Room – Horizon Series

**** BALKAN MIGRATION HORIZON: NORTH MACEDONIA ****

Period under review: from January 2021 to 19 April 2021.

[This report is based on publicly available sources to describe a changing situation. Information subject to change.]

Situation analysis recap:

- There are currently 308 refugees, 51 asylum-seekers and 562 stateless people in North Macedonia. 276 refugees are from Serbia and Kosovo, 17 from Syria and 5 from Congo. As for asylum-seekers, 12 are from Pakistan, another 12 from Afghanistan and 8 from Iraq.
- North Macedonia is a transit country and has a barbed-wire fence along its border including, controversially, along the Greek border.
- Only asylum-seekers are included in the COVID-19 vaccination plan and disease treatment. The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) advocates for inclusion of all persons of concern.
- The country has a major migrant-smuggling problem. Last year, the police stopped a significant number of trucks smuggling from 10 to 50 migrants. No new reports or findings have yet been published for 2021.
- North Macedonia faces criticisms of unlawfully detaining migrants as witnesses in proceedings against smugglers, as well as preventing refugees and migrants from entering the country and for unlawfully pushing people back to Greece.
- In spite of the construction of the barbed-wired fence and forcibly keeping out refugees and migrants, the growing numbers of migrants attempting entry at the moment seem to indicate that North Macedonia will remain a major migrant thoroughfare. Greek local residents at the Greek-North Macedonian border have expressed concerns over the rising numbers of migrants.

Sources/Further Reading:

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