



Télécoms Sans Frontières

Situation Report 1 Western Balkans – Refugee Crisis

October 28th 2015

Intervention context

Fleeing instabilities in their home countries, thousands of migrants from the Middle-East and Africa are taking dangerous and sometimes fatal routes to seek asylum in Europe.

In order to respond to this worsening context, Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) has established its intervention strategy at the heart of the migrant route at two of the most frequented registration points, **Preševo**, Serbia and **Gevgelija**, Macedonia, both of which are compulsory stops along the journey.

Government and United Nations bodies managing these areas are often faced with bottlenecks of people waiting for registration. TSF positioned itself in Preševo and Gevgelija in order to respond to the requirements through the provision of satellite communications means in order to streamline the humanitarian response for both the humanitarian community and refugees in transit.

Preševo One Stop Centre

Registration capacity: 6,000
Average duration of passage: 48 hours
Estimated n° of arrivals since July 2015: 308,000
Average daily arrivals: 6,000

Gevgelija Reception Centre (Vinojug)

Registration capacity: 2,500 – 3,000
Average duration of passage: 6 hours
Estimated n° of arrivals since August 2015: 407,000
Average daily arrivals: 4,000



Needs assessment identification

Humanitarian response needs

Due to the number of migrants bottlenecked at various border checkpoints and registration centres, various needs were identified for communications means to enhance the response amongst overseeing government and United Nations bodies.

Information sharing network through reliable Wi-Fi connectivity } **Enhanced coordination**
 Access to information

Communication for migrants

- Lack of connectivity
- High roaming costs
- Saturated & inoperative networks
- Lack of power to charge telephones
- Lack of information
- Families separated
- Lack of money

Migrants experience great difficulties not only in communication, but also in accessing vital information. Equipped with smartphones as a vital lifeline, it is crucial to provide a free, dependable service to migrants held up in transit centres.

TFSF response

Operating in collaboration the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), TFSF has installed satellite internet connections and Wi-Fi access points at border checkpoints in Preševo (18/09/2015) and Gevgelija (23/10/2015). These two areas were identified as priority zones on the migrant route, meaning that both aid and government agencies and refugees alike are guaranteed Wi-Fi access

Through this service, the government and humanitarian agencies can ensure a fast and accurate coordinated response while refugees are able to access and share information amongst themselves.

Communication, in any crisis, is a crucial factor of coordination and TFSF, alongside local governments and the United Nations, helps facilitate the flow of information to reduce holdup and ensure an efficient allocation of services and resources.

Areas of intervention



Preševo One Stop Centre

Management/administration: Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia / UNHCR

Location: Preševo - 42.304708, 21.656252

Data consumption and use | 18th Sept.2015 – 28th Oct. 2015:



Gevgelija Reception Centre

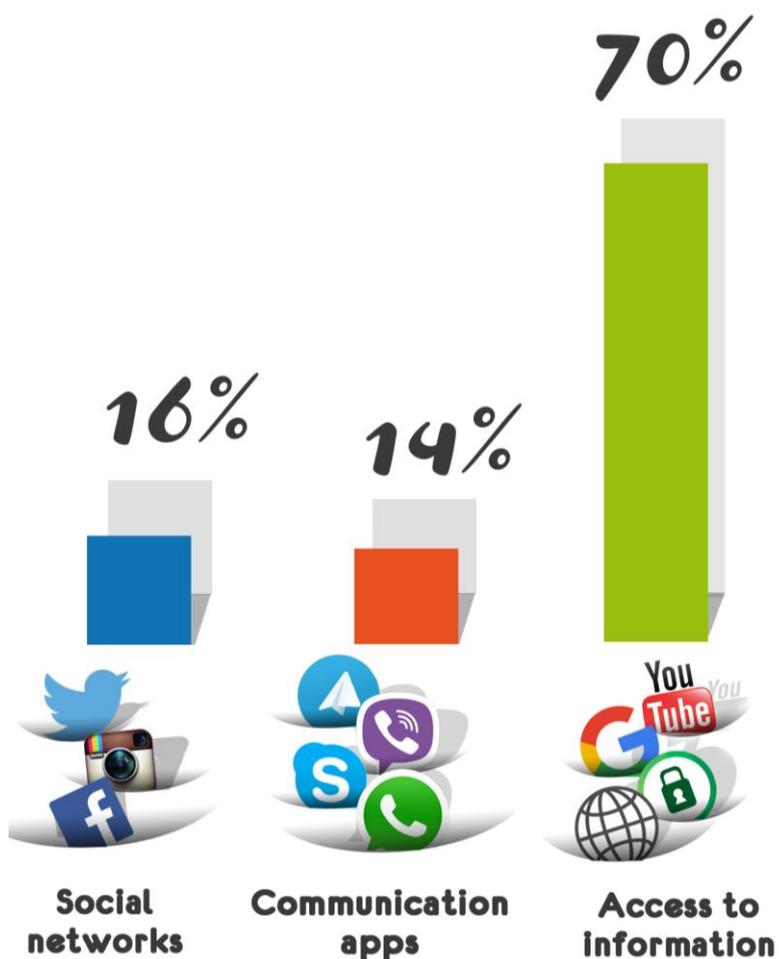
Management/Administration: Crisis Management Centre of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia / UNHCR

Location: Gevgelija – 41.132647, 22.514326

Data consumption and use: Statistics for Gevgelija are calculated according to the connection's first 5 days of activity (23/10/2015-28/10/2015).



Connectivity use for migrants:



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communications for life