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Humanitarian Action for Children

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Refugee and migrant crisis in Europe

Mostly from the Middle East, South Asia, East and West Africa, children on the move in Europe have fled conflict, insecurity and deprivation. In 2018, some 127,000 additional refugees and migrants, 20 per cent of them children, entered Europe.¹ While arrivals decreased along the Central Mediterranean route, a spike was observed on the Eastern and Western routes, worsening the situations on the Greek islands and in southern Spain. This influx is in addition to the 1.8 million refugees and migrants, including 433,000 children, who arrived in Europe between 2014 and 2017.² Turkey is hosting some 3.9 million people, including 1.7 million children.³ Although many do reach North and Western Europe over time, approximately 45,000 children were still located in Greece, Italy and the Western Balkans at the end of 2018.⁴ Despite progress across the region, refugee and migrant children continue to face heightened risks of violence, including gender-based violence and abuse, in countries of arrival, transit and destination. This is largely due to insufficient and sub-standard reception capacities, inadequate access to health and education, overwhelmed asylum and child protection systems and rising xenophobia. Some 21,000 unaccompanied or separated children registered in Greece and Italy⁵ still lack the continuum of care and protection that their situations demand, as national legislation, policies and resource allocation have yet to align with international best practices. These circumstances are undermining the capacities of children—accompanied or unaccompanied—to recover from their ordeals, preventing the realization of children's rights and jeopardizing their inclusion into new communities.

Humanitarian strategy

In 2019, UNICEF will continue to prioritize the needs of children and women on the move in Europe. At the country level, adjustments will be made to UNICEF's response, drawing on lessons learned regarding the slow improvement of reception capacities, which occasionally resulted in child migration detention, and challenges integrating older children into schooling. Combining humanitarian interventions with technical assistance, UNICEF will partner with governments and civil society organizations to address remaining challenges. In camp and urban reception facilities, UNICEF will offer mental health and psychosocial support, case management, referrals and legal aid. Mothers with young children will benefit from dedicated early childhood development, health, nutrition and vaccination guidance. Programme priorities will include the care and protection of unaccompanied children, as well as preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Statutory agencies and civil society organizations will be supported to ensure that unaccompanied and separated children are identified on time, provided with the care and protection required, and that community-based alternatives, guardianship and durable solutions

are developed. UNICEF will enhance services for at-risk and survivor women, girls, boys and men through knowledge generation, evidence-based advocacy and capacity development of frontline workers and national actors. Children's access to education and adolescent skills development, which are critical to social inclusion, will be central to the response. Through intercultural education and mediation, UNICEF and education authorities will fast track refugee and migrant children's school enrolment. Non-formal education will complement these efforts, offering accelerated learning and addressing the specific needs of children outside of compulsory education. Participation will be promoted through life-skills and empowerment programmes. Age- and culturally-appropriate information on children's rights and entitlements in countries of arrival, transit and destination will be disseminated through platforms such as U-report. Regional capacity to bolster country preparedness and response will be enhanced in a fluctuating environment. Contingency partnership agreements will be established in selected countries to facilitate the delivery of child protection, non-formal education, mother and child health services and child rights

Total people in need: 294,000¹⁰

Total children (<18) in need: 65,500¹¹

Total people to be reached: 34,800¹²

Total children to be reached: 27,800

2019 programme targets:

Greece¹³

- 9,500 children benefiting from quality child protection services
- 3,000 people accessing gender-based violence prevention and response services
- 15,500 children enrolled in formal and non-formal education, including early childhood education
- 1,800 adolescent boys and girls reached with participation and empowerment

Italy

- 1,150 unaccompanied and separated children benefiting from quality child protection services
- 2,250 frontline workers and caregivers trained on child protection and alternative care
- 2,100 adolescents participating in skills development programmes
- 3,000 adolescent boys and girls benefiting from enhanced participation

Bulgaria

- 300 children benefiting from quality child protection services
- 200 people accessing gender-based violence prevention and response services
- 600 children participating in non-formal education, including early childhood education

Serbia

- 1,500 children benefiting from quality child protection services
- 200 people accessing gender-based violence prevention and response services
- 500 children enrolled in formal education activities

Bosnia and Herzegovina

- 2,000 children benefiting from quality child protection services
- 500 children participating in non-formal education activities
- 500 children vaccinated

Regional technical support

- 9 countries with enhanced preparedness and response capacities related to children on the move¹⁴

monitoring. Earlier investments in the human resources roster will permit fast deployments to most-affected countries. UNICEF will foster coordination around child rights monitoring and case management capacity, including best interest determination procedures,⁶ across regions and United Nations agencies. Regardless of their immigration status, the rights of refugee and migrant children will be further promoted through strategic advocacy efforts at the country and regional levels, together with relevant civil society organizations, ombudspersons and governments.

Results from 2018

As of 31 October 2018, UNICEF had US\$24.5 million available against the US\$34.2 million appeal (72 per cent funded). Since the start of the response in 2015, UNICEF has reached some 285,000 refugee and migrant children with a comprehensive package of services. In 2018, some 26,000 children benefited from mental health and psychosocial support. More than 5,400 of the most at-risk children, including unaccompanied and separated children, were identified and received case management and referrals. UNICEF reached some 4,000 people with gender-based violence prevention and response services, and supported the capacity building of 1,000 frontline workers. In addition, 2,900 staff in care facilities for unaccompanied children and reception centres across the region received training on child protection standards. Drawing on UNICEF technical assistance and knowledge sharing, government partners amended their child protection legal and policy frameworks and increased their capacities for reception and service provision. In Germany, reception minimum standards are gradually being rolled out at the sub-national level by states and municipalities. National authorities in Bulgaria, Greece and Italy adopted new child rights-compliant legislation and mobilized resources for appropriate care arrangements and guardianship for unaccompanied children. In 2018, more than 15,600 children participated in formal and structured non-formal education, including early childhood education activities. UNICEF worked with education authorities to make schools more inclusive and equipped teachers with the required knowledge, skills and technology solutions. Joint monitoring, communication and advocacy work with civil society, ombudspersons and UNICEF National Committees, as reflected in the UNICEF report, *Protected on Paper? An analysis of Nordic country responses to asylum-seeking children*,⁷ the Children Uprooted campaign⁸ and the Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts,⁹ have raised the profile of refugee and migrant children and ultimately advanced the realization of their rights.

	UNICEF 2018 targets	UNICEF 2018 results
HEALTH AND NUTRITION		
Children under 5 years accessing mother and baby care services, including nutrition services		
Serbia	1,000	262
Mothers benefiting from infant and young child feeding counselling at family support hubs, child-friendly spaces and mother-baby corners		
Serbia	700	1,004
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE AND BASIC SUPPLIES		
Children receiving culturally-appropriate basic supplies, including clothes, baby hygiene items and dignity kits for women and girls		
Italy	1,000	241
Serbia	4,000	1,474
CHILD PROTECTION		
Children reached with quality child protection support (mental health and psychosocial support, legal counselling and case management) and protection standards		
Greece	5,000	9,090
Italy ⁱ	4,300	2,008
Serbia ⁱⁱ	3,000	1,004
Bulgaria	300	146
Germany ⁱⁱⁱ	10,000	13,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina ^{iv}	600	821
At-risk children (including unaccompanied and separated children) identified and referred through screening by outreach teams and child protection support centres		
Greece	450	2,014
Italy	2,500	1,433
Serbia	1,500	1,980
Frontline workers trained on child protection standards / child protection in emergencies		
Greece	400	547
Italy	1,300	1,197
Serbia	200	141
Bulgaria	100	32
Germany ^v	2,500	960
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE		
People accessing gender-based violence prevention and response services		
Greece	2,200	2,868
Serbia	350	913
Bulgaria	150	178

Frontline workers benefiting from gender-based violence training		
Greece	380	256
Italy	600	578
Bulgaria	50	90
EDUCATION ^{vi}		
Children including adolescents participating in structured non-formal education activities		
Greece	2,000	4,307
Italy	1,100	172
Serbia	1,000	1,142
Bulgaria	600	368
Bosnia and Herzegovina	250	0
Children enrolled in mainstream formal education		
Greece	6,000	8,000
Italy	1,500	320
Serbia	600	373
Children aged 3 to 5 years benefiting from early childhood education activities		
Greece	900	900
Bulgaria	300	63
Children receiving education materials		
Greece	6,000	5,349

Results are through 31 October 2018.

ⁱ Overall targets in Italy were only partially met due to a combination of financial and contextual factors: the Humanitarian Action for Children appeal was only 50 per cent funded, and new legislation resulted in closed or re-qualified reception facilities, impacting UNICEF capacity to scale up the e-learning platform and the implementation of the UNICEF Upshift initiative as planned.

ⁱⁱ In Serbia, results reflect only newly registered children, and hence do not fully reflect the actual attendance of children benefiting from continuous service provision since 2017. The average attendance of services in January 2018 was 402 children reached with quality child protection support, 502 children attending non-formal education and 680 children in mainstream education, 196 children and 150 mothers accessing mother and baby care services and benefiting from infant and young child feeding counselling.

ⁱⁱⁱ In Germany, UNICEF is not providing direct services to refugee and migrant children in reception centres, but children have been benefiting from increased access to protection through improved protection standards and UNICEF capacity building activities for managers and frontline workers in 100 reception centres.

^{iv} Targets and results in Bosnia and Herzegovina reflect activities established only during the second half of 2018, following a sharp increase of needs.

^v Since the beginning of the UNICEF programme in Germany in 2016, a total of 2,757 frontline workers, protection coordinators and centre managers have been sensitized to and trained on implementing child protection standards in refugee accommodation centres. The 2018 target was not met due to the important downsizing of the UNICEF response in Germany in agreement with the Government and the German National Committee.

^{vi} Education targets in some countries were unmet mainly as a result of the fluid situation and lack of funding for education programmes. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the lack of physical space in reception facilities and challenges in national coordination and operational plans for the enrolment of children in school resulted in the impossibility of getting children back in classrooms. Nevertheless, following significant groundwork done with national authorities and partners, preconditions are in place for the start of education activities in early 2019.

Funding requirements

UNICEF is requesting US\$27.5 million to meet the needs of refugee and migrant children in Europe in 2019. Inadequate funding will hinder the effort to eradicate violence against and abuse of children, and undermine their social inclusion and access to basic services. The response will focus on key interventions that support children in the most affected countries. To adapt to evolving and emerging situations, UNICEF is requesting flexible funding and including rapid reaction support. In line with UNICEF's multi-regional approach, these requirements complement those outlined in the Humanitarian Action for Children appeals for Syrian refugees and the Middle East and North Africa, West and Central Africa and Europe and Central Asia regions.

Country ¹⁵	2019 requirements (US\$)
Countries with children on the move	
Greece ¹⁶	15,103,232
Italy	3,850,000
Bulgaria	630,000
Serbia ¹⁷	1,300,000
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4,619,850
Regional support	
Contingency partnership agreements	1,500,000
Deployment of technical expertise and coordination	500,000
Total	27,503,082

Sector	Greece	Italy ¹⁸	Bulgaria	Serbia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Regional technical support and coordination	2019 total requirement (US\$)
Health and nutrition				150,000	487,464		637,464
Water, sanitation and hygiene and basic needs				100,000	134,520		234,520
Child protection	7,100,000	1,800,000	200,000	500,000	2,825,832		12,425,832
Gender-based violence	665,000	450,000	230,000	300,000			1,645,000
Education	7,100,000	1,220,000	200,000	250,000	635,664		9,405,664
Adolescents/youth	238,232						238,232
Cross-cutting		380,000			536,370		916,370
Regional support						2,000,000	2,000,000
Total	15,103,232	3,850,000	630,000	1,300,000	4,619,850	2,000,000	27,503,082

¹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mediterranean Situation Operational Portal, November 2018.

² Ibid.

³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Turkey, October 2018.

⁴ This includes some 25,700 refugee and migrant children in Greece (UNICEF Greece); 17,300 refugee and migrant unaccompanied and separated children in Italy (Government of Italy Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs); 1,000 refugee and migrant children in Serbia (UNHCR Serbia); 600 refugee and migrant children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (United Nations Country Team Bosnia and Herzegovina); and 400 refugee and migrant children in Bulgaria (Bulgaria State Agency for Refugees).

⁵ This includes some 17,300 unaccompanied and separated children in Italy (Government of Italy Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) and 3,600 unaccompanied and separated children in Greece (Greek National Centre for Social Solidarity).

⁶ In line with article 3 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the joint general comment no. 3 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and no. 22 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the general principles regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration; and UNHCR Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child.

⁷ United Nations Children's Fund Office of Research - Innocenti, Protected on Paper? An analysis of Nordic country responses to asylum-seeking children, UNICEF, Florence, 2018.

⁸ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Children Uprooted', UNICEF, <www.unicef.org/children-uprooted>, accessed 5 December 2018.

⁹ Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts, 'About the Initiative on Child Rights in the Global Compacts', Initiative for Child Rights, <www.childrenonthemove.org/>, accessed 5 November 2018.

¹⁰ This figure is based on the current refugee and migrant population present in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Serbia, as well as an estimation of new arrivals in 2019 in these countries. UNHCR, November 2018.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² UNICEF interventions in affected countries mainly target children and women in the areas of child protection, gender-based violence, education, health and nutrition.

¹³ Countries are presented in the following order: countries of arrival (Greece, Italy and Bulgaria), followed by countries of transit (Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) or following the migration route, with the countries with the greatest population needs listed first.

¹⁴ Countries to be provided with regional technical preparedness and response assistance and capacity building include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

¹⁵ UNICEF has concluded its programmatic presence in Germany as of December 2018, in coordination with the Government of Germany and the German National Committee.

¹⁶ Increased funding requirements are due to the increase in arrivals in 2018, coupled with the continuous need to support the Government of Greece's capacity to respond to the refugee and migrant situation in the country.

¹⁷ Funding requirements in Serbia have been reduced to reflect the decrease in needs related to refugees and migrants in the country, and the gradual transition from UNICEF-supported to nationally-owned service provision.

¹⁸ In Italy, child protection and education programming focuses mainly on adolescents and youth.

Who to contact for further information:

Afshan Khan
Regional Director, Europe and Central Asia
Tel: +41 22 90 95 502
Email: akhan@unicef.org

Grant Leaity
Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Programmes (EMOPS)
Tel: +1 212 326 7150
Email: gleaity@unicef.org

Carla Haddad Mardini
Director, Public Partnership Division (PPD)
Tel: +1 212 326 7160
Email: chaddadmardini@unicef.org