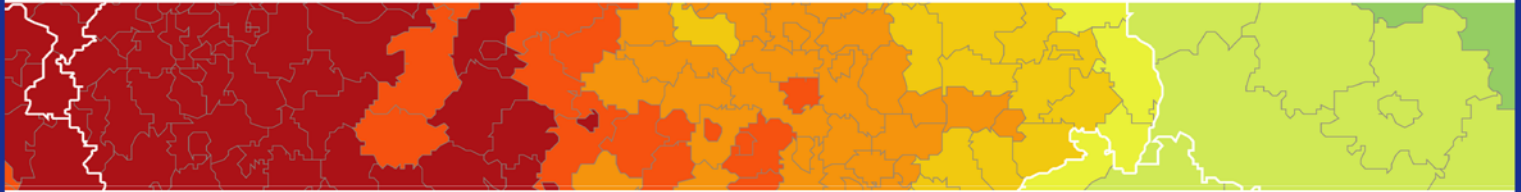


Inspire policy making by territorial evidence



# Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe

Applied Research

**Case study – Impact of large inflows of asylum seekers and adoption of restrictive policy in the border area of Horgoš-Rösztke (Serbian-Hungarian border)**

Version 18/07/2019

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#### **Authors**

Iva Plašilová, Noémi Szokol, VVA (Italy)

Dragiša Mijacic, Marija Milenkovic, Institute for Territorial Economic Development (Republic of Serbia)

#### **Technical Support**

Tatjana Potezica, Institute for Territorial Economic Development (editing)

#### **Advisory Group**

Project Support team: Radu Necsuliu (Romania), Lodovico Gherardi (Italy) and Andor Urmos (European Commission)

#### **ESPON EGTC**

Martin Gauk (Policy Expert), Laurent Frideres (HoU EandO), Ilona Raugze (Director), Johannes Kiersch (Financial Expert)

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## Abbreviations

ASB	Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund
BCHR	Belgrade Centre for Human Rights
CRPC	Crisis Response and Policy Centre
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EHO	Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
HCIT	Humanitarian Center for Integration and Tolerance
IDC	Initiative for Development and Cooperation
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
LAP	Local Action Plan
LDA	Local Democracy Agency
Madad	EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis
MDM	Médecins du Monde
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
RC	Reception centre
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
TC	Transit centre
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
EC	European Commission
ESPON	European Territorial Observatory Network
EU	European Union
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics

## Executive summary

This case study focuses on the Horgoš-Röszke border-crossing and the surrounding area which on the Hungarian side includes the city of Szeged and from the Serbian side the city of Subotica and Kanjiža municipality. This location was chosen for the case study because it has experienced a significant influx of asylum seekers between 2014 and 2016 via the so-called 'Balkan route'.

The border-crossing was heavily affected by the influx of refugees in 2015, particularly as it is an entry point into the Schengen area. In the summer of 2015, thousands of asylum seekers crossed the border at Röszke every day. The majority of refugees either refused to register in Hungary and cooperate with the authorities, or registered and applied for asylum, but then left the country before their application was assessed. By September 2, 2015, there were 159,968 illegal border crossings registered in Hungary, but only 148,643 asylum applications had been received. On June 15, 2015, the Hungarian government announced the construction of a technical border lock along the southern border of Serbia to slow down the inflow.

The Hungarian national authorities set up a collection camp near Röszke to process the incoming people in 2015. Once a person was processed, they received a train ticket together with instruction papers to take them to one of the reception centres located in other parts of the country. Once persons were processed, and in possession of a train ticket, they would be taken to Szeged to the train station. Frequently, however, the buses with the asylum seekers arrived after the last train of the day, leaving them stranded in the city centre for the night with no shelter.

The local civic society and NGOs mobilised to support the refugees. An example of such activation is MigSzol Szeged, a migrant solidarity group that was founded as a reaction to the humanitarian crisis caused by the influx of large numbers of people in a short period of time. In Szeged, the group provided legal advice, translation services, information, medical assistance, food and hygienic products. MigSzol Szeged later extended its reach to the collection camps, where it delivered food packages and provided other support not only to asylum seekers but also national authorities.

In March 2016, the Hungarian government introduced a number of legislative measures that effectively closed the whole Hungarian-Serbian border to asylum seekers. Following the closure of the border, there were significant numbers of migrants in the centre of Subotica and in abandoned buildings close to the border. The Hungarian police allowed 150-200 migrants to cross the border one day, which served to 'pull' others to the Subotica area. From April 2016, Hungary introduced a daily quota, allowing 30 people per day to enter and claim asylum at Horgoš-Röszke and one other border crossing.

Leaders of the migrant communities helped to prepare a 'Hungarian list' of refugees allowed to cross the border to claim asylum each day, in line with the established quota.

The closure of the Western Balkans route led to an increase in the number of people stranded in Serbia. From April to October 2016, there were more than 1,000 people in tents at the Horgoš transit zone, more than 500 in Kelebija, and up to 600 in the transit centre in Subotica, which only had capacity for 130 people.

The situation has thus evolved from an emergency to the one that requires additional efforts from authorities and donors to meet more medium-to-long-term needs.

In 2017 and 2018, Serbia adopted new laws and strategies in order to improve procedures for claiming asylum and to improve the situation of asylum seekers and refugees in the country.

In 2018, the asylum procedures were tightened further. Only one person per crossing point per day may enter Hungarian, or one family per crossing point per week, which is the more common practice. The Subotica transit centre is now restricted to housing asylum-seekers who are on the approved list to cross into Hungary. As of 2019, there are no migrants in the two transit zones (Röszke and Tompa), but illegal crossings and cases of smuggling still occur.

The support of international community and NGOs in Subotica and Kanjiža was highly significant, especially at the border crossing points during the mass influx. NGOs are generally directly involved in the distribution of humanitarian and other assistance, while international organisations are involved in monitoring and take an active role in providing and funding humanitarian support. Humanitarian assistance is provided to all migrants, regardless of status. Various donors supported capacity-building activities for the local authorities and other actors.



# 1 Profile of the area

This case study focuses on the Horgoš-Röszke border-crossing and the surrounding area. This includes the city of Szeged in Hungary and the city of Subotica and Kanjiža municipality in Serbia. The location was chosen because it has experienced a significant influx of asylum seekers between 2014 and 2016 that were coming through the so-called Balkan route. From 2016, the Hungarian government introduced a number of legislative measures that effectively closed the whole Hungarian-Serbian border to asylum seekers and introduced a daily entry quota. Horgoš-Röszke is one of only two crossings through which asylum seekers can still enter Hungary.

On the Hungarian side, the case study focuses on the county of Csongrád, with its seat in Szeged, while in Serbia the main focus is on the city of Subotica.

## 1.1 Socio economic context

Horgoš-Röszke is a Hungarian-Serbian border-crossing located in southern Hungary/northern Serbia. The Hungarian side is in Csongrád county (NUTS 3) and Dél-Alföld (NUTS 2). On the Serbian side, Horgoš (Kanjiža municipality) and the city of Subotica are part of Vojvodina Region (NUTS 2). Horgoš is located in North Banat District (NUTS 3) while Subotica is the seat of North Backa District (NUTS 3).

Figure 1: Horgoš-Röszke border crossing



Source: Maps are based on <https://satellites.pro/>

### 1.1.1 Csongrád county

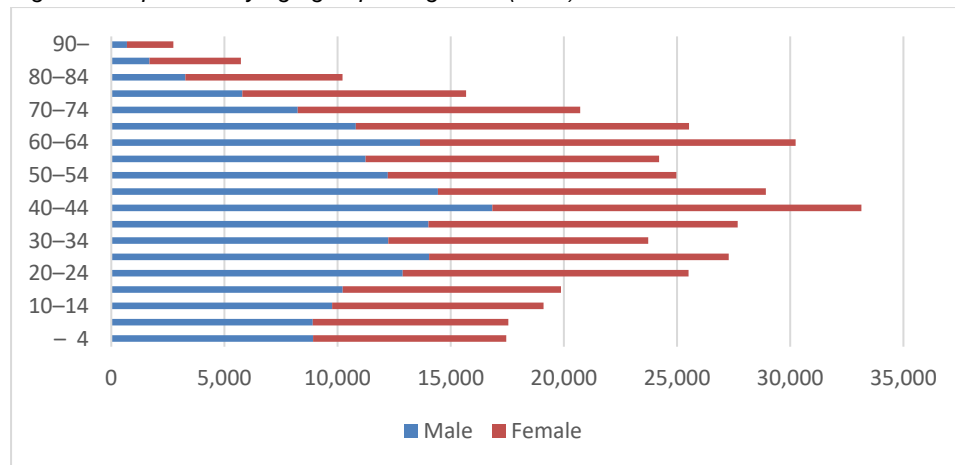
Röszke is a village in southern Hungary, in Csongrád county. More specifically, the village lies along the Tisza River and Hungary's southern border with Serbia. It has good motorway access and is close to the county seat, Szeged.

Csongrád county is the smallest county in the Southern Plain (Dél-Alföld) of Hungary. However, it is one of the most populous counties in the country, with a population density well above the national average (excluding the capital), but similar to rural areas in the EU.<sup>1</sup> **Error! Reference**

<sup>1</sup> Csongrád Megyei Önkormányzat Hivatala (2012). Csongrád Megye Területfejlesztési Koncepciója Helyzetfeltárás 2012. [http://www.terport.hu/webfm\\_send/4158](http://www.terport.hu/webfm_send/4158)

**source not found.** below provides an overview of the structure of population in Csongrád county at the beginning of 2018.

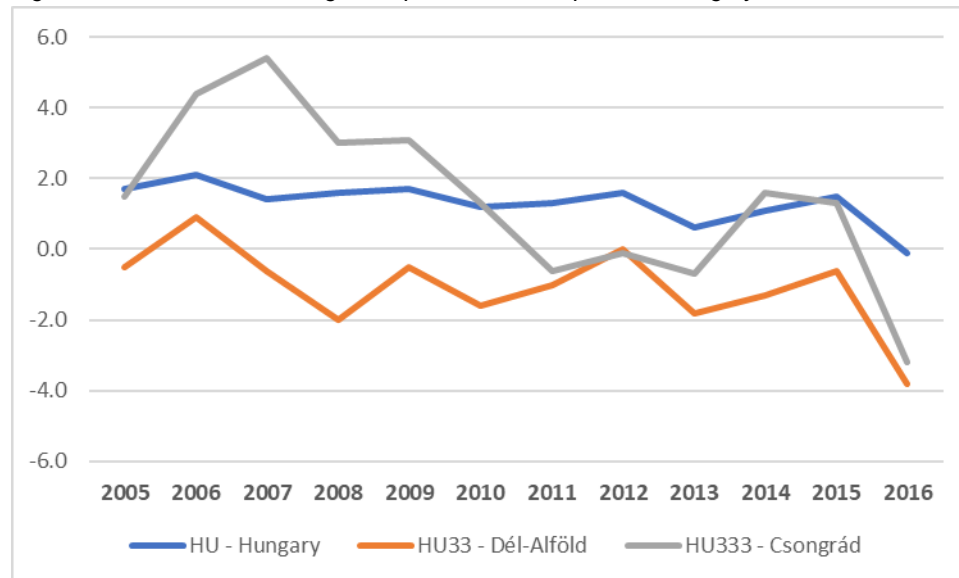
Figure 2: Population by age group and gender (2018)



Source: Central Statistical Office of Hungary

In line with national developments, Csongrád county has been experiencing a negative crude rate of natural change of the population for more than 10 years. However, levels of net migration have fluctuated. This was positive at national level until 2016, but in both Dél-Alföld (NUTS 2) and Csongrád county (NUTS 3) rates have varied, as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.** That said, the data are in line with the characteristics of cluster 5 regions of strongly negative natural and net migration population change rates.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 3: Crude rate of net migration plus statistical update in Hungary



Source: Eurostat

<sup>2</sup> For more information on the cluster typology see ESPON MIGRARE Final Report.

Csongrád county is one of the most important Hungarian counties for agriculture. The combination of its topographic features, long hours of sunshine and the proximity of rivers make the land excellent for agriculture.<sup>3</sup> Farming has been central to the economy of the region for many years. In 2010, the contribution of agriculture to Hungary's gross domestic product (GDP) was significantly higher than the national and rural average, whereas the contribution of industry and construction was around the national average.<sup>4</sup> Overall, in 2016 the GDP per inhabitant of Csongrád county was EUR 14,700, about EUR 5,000 below the national average<sup>5</sup> and in line with the characteristics of cluster 5 regions.

Produce for which the county is known includes Szeged paprika, as well as cereals, vegetables and fruits. Half of Hungary's onion, garlic, spice and root vegetables are produced by Makó and Szeged districts. Makó onions and peaches are known throughout the country. The state-recognised wine-growing areas of Csongrád county surround the village of Pusztamérgecs and (city of) Csongrád. The cultivation of white peppers and processing of poultry in Szentes also contributes to local employment. One of the most famous meat factories in the country, Pick, is located in Szeged.<sup>6</sup>

The service sector's share of the economy in Csongrád is between the national and rural averages. The county's industry is concentrated in urban areas while the rest of the county has very poor economic performance. There is little tourism. According to data from 2010, the number of guest nights per thousand inhabitants was less than half of the national average.<sup>7</sup>

The figure below provides an overview of the economic sectors in the region and their respective share in the local employment.

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<sup>3</sup> Csongrád megye horgászvízei. Csongrád megye-Gazdasága. <http://users.atw.hu/kettoef/csszabolcs/Hmvhely/csongrad%20megye%20gazdasaga.htm>.

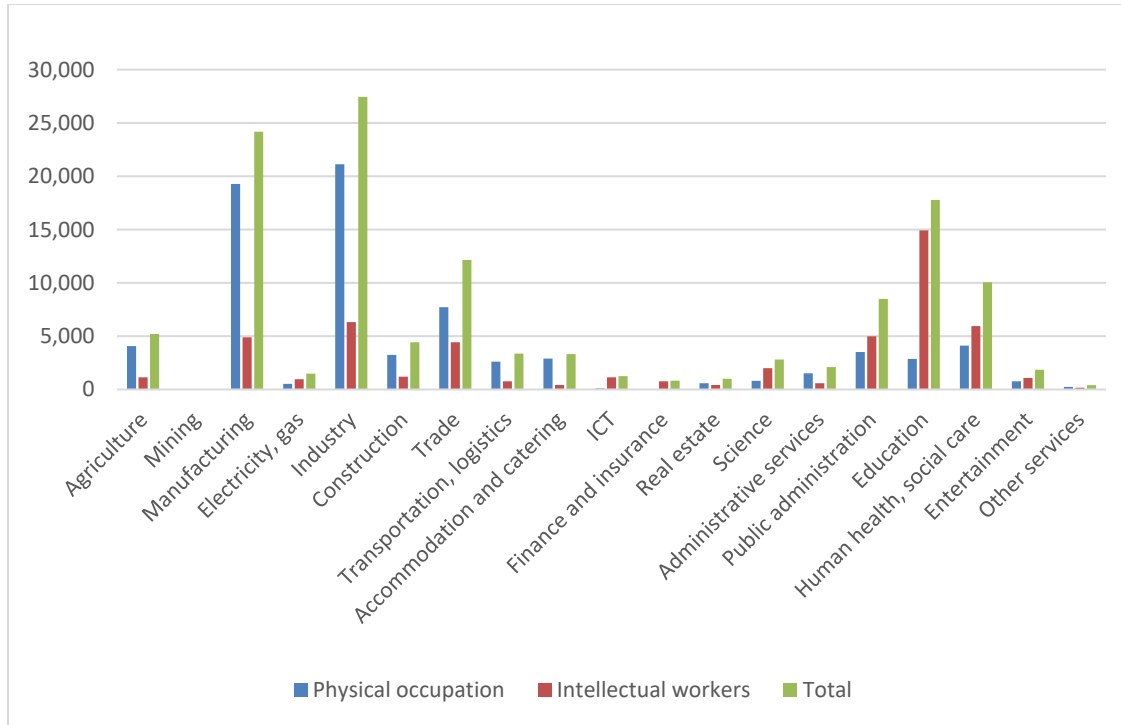
<sup>4</sup> Csongrád Megyei Önkormányzat Hivatala (2012). Csongrád Megye Területfejlesztési Konceptiója Helyzetfeltárás 2012. [http://www.terport.hu/webfm\\_send/4158](http://www.terport.hu/webfm_send/4158).

<sup>5</sup> Eurostat. Gross domestic product (GDP) at current market prices by NUTS 3 regions [nama\_10r\_3gdp].

<sup>6</sup> Csongrád megye horgászvízei. Csongrád megye-Gazdasága. <http://users.atw.hu/kettoef/csszabolcs/Hmvhely/csongrad%20megye%20gazdasaga.htm>.

<sup>7</sup> Csongrád Megyei Önkormányzat Hivatala (2012). Csongrád Megye Területfejlesztési Konceptiója Helyzetfeltárás 2012. [http://www.terport.hu/webfm\\_send/4158](http://www.terport.hu/webfm_send/4158).

Figure 4: Number of employees by economic branch in 2018



Source: Central Statistical Office of Hungary

In 2010, Csongr d county had a high rate of economic inactivity, one of the highest rates in the EU. Unemployment stood at 8.9%. By the beginning of 2018 it had fallen to 2.8 %, below the national average of 3.9% and the EU average of 6.8%. However only 61.1% of 15-74 year-olds in Csongr d county were economically active<sup>8</sup>, below the (2017) national average of 73.3% as well as the EU average of 72.2%.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.1.2 Subotica and Kanji a

Horgo  is a settlement in Kanji a municipality in North Banat District, Vojvodina Province. North Banat District is located in the far north-east of Serbia, on the border of Serbia-Hungary-Romania. It has an area of 2,329 km<sup>2</sup> and includes 50 settlements and cadastral municipalities. According to the 2011 census, there were 151,382 inhabitants, living in households of different ethnic composition. The largest road border crossing with Hungary, Horgo -R szke is in Kanji a municipality. Kanji a had 25,236 inhabitants in 2011, but the population is declining. The municipality had an estimated 23,992 inhabitants at the end of June 2017.<sup>10</sup>

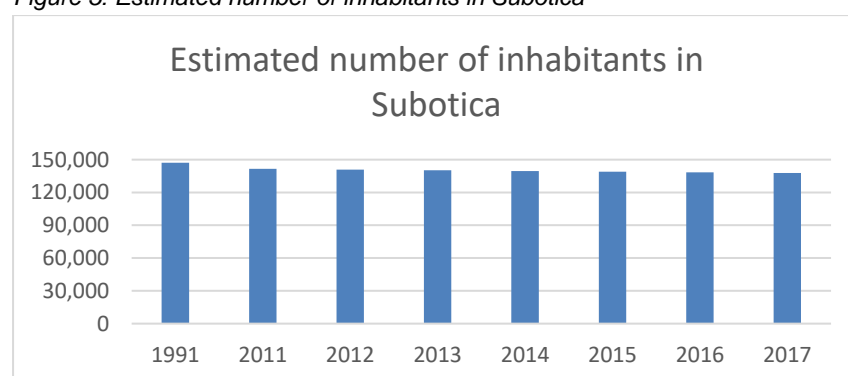
<sup>8</sup> Central Statistical Office of Hungary. <http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/megy/183/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> Eurostat. Employment rate by sex, age group 20-64 [t2020\_10]. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/main-tables>. Consulted on 01/04/2019.

<sup>10</sup> National Statistical Office (2018) Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia: 147. <http://bit.ly/2MV3UZ4>.

In the west, Kanjiža borders Subotica, Serbia's northernmost city. Subotica is located in the North Backa District of Vojvodina Province. North Backa District is located on the Hungarian border and has an area of 1,784 km<sup>2</sup>. Subotica is located 10 km from the Serbia-Hungary border with an area of 1,007 km<sup>2</sup> (123 km<sup>2</sup> is urban and 884 km<sup>2</sup> rural). At the time of the latest census (2011), it had 141,554 inhabitants (68,040 male and 73,514 female). Some 105,681 of those inhabitants live in the urban city and 35,873 in rural areas.

Figure 5: Estimated number of inhabitants in Subotica



Source: National Statistical Office, *Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia, 2018*<sup>11</sup>

The largest group of inhabitants in Subotica are people aged 45-59 (32,162), followed by those aged 30-44 (29,528). By gender, there are more females than males (73,514 females; 68,040 males). Females are dominant in age groups over 45 years. The average age is 41.9 (40.2 for males and 43.5 for females). The 45-59 year-olds are also the main demographic group in Kanjiža (5,744). There is a small difference in the number of females and males (12,402 males and 12,941 females). Average age is 42.4.<sup>12</sup>

Subotica is a multi-ethnic city, with the population consisting of more than 20 different nationalities, of which Hungarians, Serbs, Croats and Bunjevci are the most numerous. In total, 63,412 (44.8%) inhabitants speak Serbian, 50,621 (35.8%) speak Hungarian, 6,313 (4.5%) speak Bunjevac and 4% speak Croatian.

In Kanjiža, 22,039 (86.9%) of the inhabitants are of Hungarian ethnic origin. There are 2,015 (7.9%) Serbian inhabitants.<sup>13</sup>

In regard to education, 23.3% (28,294) of inhabitants<sup>14</sup> in Subotica have primary education, 50% (60,727) have secondary education and 14.2% (17,241) have a university diploma (faculty and college). A total of 10.8% the city's inhabitants have an incomplete primary education and 1.3% of inhabitants have no formal education at all. In Kanjiža, 29.8% (6,847) of inhabitants<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid: 147.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid: 46-47.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid: 84.

<sup>14</sup> Population age 15 and over.

<sup>15</sup> Population age 15 and over.

have primary education, 42.4% (9,219) secondary education, and 8.3% (1,817) inhabitants have a university diploma. Some 18.1% of its population have an incomplete primary education.<sup>16</sup>

In the last 10 years, the population of Serbia has decreased by about 385,000 in total. Subotica, like most cities, has had a negative rate of natural increase in recent years. In 2015 it was -957, in 2016 it was -900, and in 2017 -761 inhabitants. A falling population also affects the fertility rate, which is significantly lower in Serbia than in other countries nearby. However, the fertility rate in Subotica marginally increased between 2015 (1.3) and 2017 (1.5). Kanjiža has also had a negative rate of natural increase over the same period: in 2015 it was -231, in 2016 -226, and in 2017 it was -223. During this period, the total fertility rate varied: 1.4 in 2015, 1.2 in 2016, and 1.3 in 2017.

Due to its geographical location, Subotica has become the most important administrative, industrial, commercial, transport and cultural centre of the North Backa region. Its industry has traditionally been diversified. In addition to various sectors of the food industry, the city has firms active in electromechanical compression, the chemical industry, textile industry, leather processing and footwear, socks, printing and construction. Agricultural land makes up approximately 90% (88,443 ha) of the total area of Subotica. Arable land is one of the most important natural resources.

Kanjiža has a highly developed economy, in particular in building materials, including tiles, ceramic tiles and thermal and hydro-insulation materials; and the food industry: the production and processing of spice pepper and frozen vegetables and fruits. This is an important fruit and wine-growing region. There is significant potential for the development of spa and rural tourism in future.<sup>17</sup>

According to the 2011 census, Subotica has the total of 59,364 economically active people, out of which 46,593 (78.5%) persons are employed and 12,771 (21.5%) unemployed. There are 82,190 economically inactive inhabitants: retired (40.9%), under-15 (24.7%), pupils and students (12.1%), housewives (11.9%), other (9.1%), persons with income from property (1.2%). Out of 25,343 inhabitants, Kanjiža has 10,290 (40.6%) economically active people: 8,622 (34%) are employed, while 1,688 (6.7%) are unemployed.<sup>18</sup>

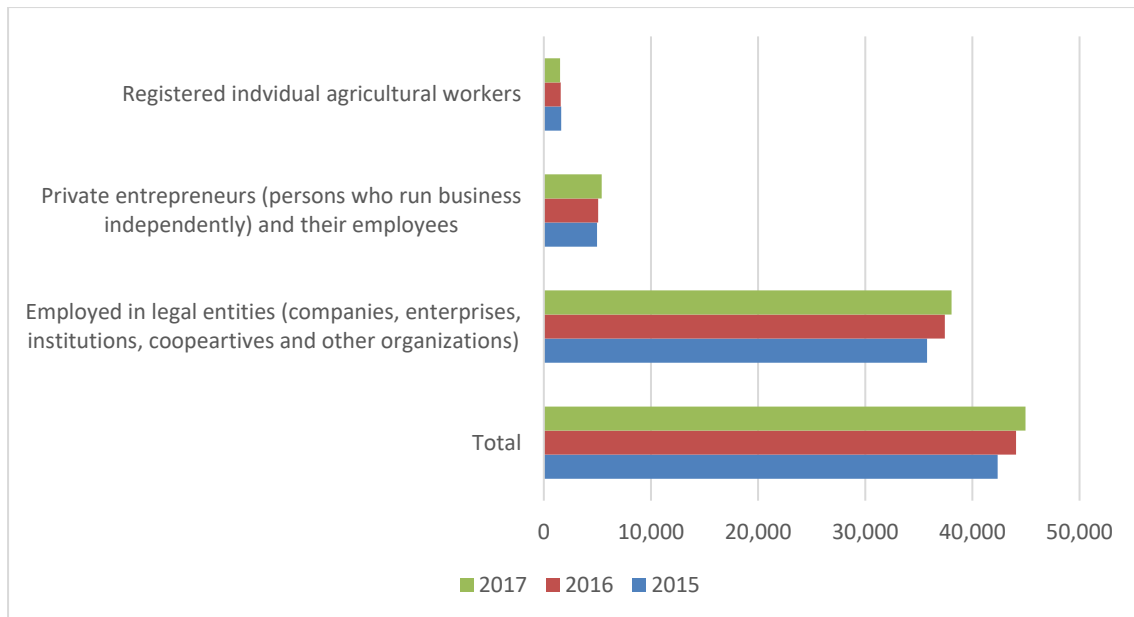
*Figure 6: Registered employment in Subotica, 2015-2017*

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid: 93.

<sup>17</sup> North Banat District, available at: <http://bit.ly/2SXnJ8m>

<sup>18</sup> Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (2018) Municipalities and regions of the Republic of Serbia. <http://bit.ly/2MV3UZ4>. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (2017) Municipalities and regions of the Republic of Serbia. <http://bit.ly/2Dkd39g>. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (2016) Municipalities and regions of the Republic of Serbia. <http://bit.ly/2I0Nxvo>.



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, *Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia for 2016, 2017 and 2018*

Registered employment in Kanjiža in 2017 was 6,231 people in total. The majority were employed in legal entities (75.2%), 12.3% were self-employed, and 12.5% were individual agricultural workers.

The number of unemployed people in Subotica fell from 8,879 in 2015 to 5,858 in 2017. The number of unskilled people also fell over the same period. Number of unemployed people in Kanjiža fell from 1,881 in 2015 to 1,644 in 2017.<sup>19</sup>

Table 1: Unemployed persons in Subotica, 2015 - 2017

Municipality Subotica	Total	Seeking employment for the first time		Unskilled <sup>20</sup>		Women		Per 1000 inhabitants
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
2015	8,879	2,271	25.6	4,115	46.3	4,183	47.1	64
2016	7,528	1,919	25.5	3,604	47.9	3,527	46.9	54
2017	5,858	1,684	28.7	3,010	51.4	2,761	47.1	43

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, *Municipalities and regions in the Republic of Serbia for 2016, 2017 and 2018*

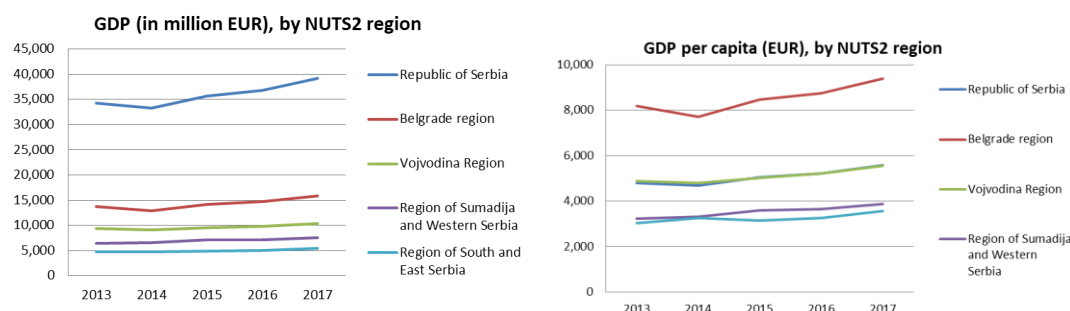
According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the GDP of Vojvodina for 2017 amounts to 26.5% of national GDP, which is significantly lower than the GDP of Belgrade (40.4%) but higher than the GDP of the region of Sumadija and Western Serbia (19.2%) and the region of South and East Serbia (13.8%). The GDP of Vojvodina increased slightly between 2013 (EUR 9,327 million) and 2017 (EUR 10,393 million) (Figure 7).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Semi-skilled (hastily trained) and unskilled with lower education.

The GDP per capita for Vojvodina was EUR 5,555 in 2017, almost identical to the national average (EUR 5,580), but around 40% lower than the GDP per capita of Belgrade (EUR 9,387) (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Regional GDP and GDP per capita, 2013-2017



Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Regional GDP<sup>21</sup>

There was an increase in immigration to Subotica between 1961-1970 (8,288 people) and 1981-1990 (10,498 people). Immigration fell to 8,608 for the period from 1991-2002. During the 1999 conflict, a number of citizens of the Republic of Serbia who left Kosovo\* moved to Subotica. Despite its well-developed industrial zone and attractiveness to inhabitants of surrounding towns, many, especially younger, residents of Subotica with the right to obtain Hungarian and Croatian passports, have moved to the EU, looking for better living standards. This has been partially offset by an influx of older people returning to Serbia after living abroad. Subotica's ethnic picture is also changing, with an influx of Roma evicted from Kosovo, a growing Chinese community, and more frequent mixed marriages. However, local authorities do not recognise these changes in their policies and public services.

In 2016, there were 1,937 immigrants in Subotica, with an average age of 34.1. This compares with 1,721 emigrants, with an average age 33.1. The nationality of both groups consists mainly of Serbs, Hungarians, Montenegrins and Yugoslavs.<sup>22</sup>

## 1.2 Current stock and flows of asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants in the area of analysis

Due to their geographical position, both Hungary and Serbia were severely affected by the migrant crisis. The countries were located on the Balkan route and while they were receiving some asylum applications, the majority of the refugees/asylum seekers were looking to transit through these countries further into Europe, namely to Germany or Sweden.

<sup>21</sup> Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (2018) Regional gross domestic product, 2015–2017. <https://bit.ly/2NzOJ7W>; National statistical office (2016) Regional gross domestic product: Regions and areas of the Republic of Serbia, 2014. <https://bit.ly/2EDiP7B>.

<sup>22</sup> National statistical office of the Republic of Serbia (2017) Demographic Yearbook, 2016. <http://bit.ly/2DWEA1Z>.



In 2014, only 16,500 migrants expressed their intention to seek asylum in Serbia with only 388 submitted asylum applications. Out of these, six were approved. In 2015 and in the first quarter of 2016, more than 920,000 refugees and migrants (primarily from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq) passed through Serbia. In 2015, the number of people who expressed an intention to seek asylum increased dramatically to 579,518, with about 50% of them coming from Syria, followed by Afghans and Iraqis. However, the total number of asylum applications was only 586. Of these, 16 were granted refugee status and 14 were granted international protection. A similar trend continued in 2016 and 2017, albeit with lower numbers. Of the 96,236 migrants staying in Serbia in 2016 only 12,811 migrants expressed their intention to seek asylum.

A significant number of migrants use illegal ways to continue their journey to their final destination in Western Europe. Comparing national data on illegal flows, the highest number of people crossing illegally through Serbia was in 2015 (15,306). After the Hungarian border closed, the number of people crossing the border illegally in 2016 dropped drastically (6,231). In 2017, there were 3,717 illegal entries.<sup>23</sup> On the Serbian side, the numbers of migrants crossing, asylum applications and illegal entries was closely connected to legislative developments in Hungary.

In 2015, more asylum seekers arrived in Hungary than in the previous 23 years combined with more than 177,000 asylum seekers being registered. The volume of the 2015 refugee wave meant that Hungary had the highest number of asylum seekers per 100,000 inhabitants in the EU, with 1,797 people.<sup>24</sup> Csongrád, being the county at the southern border, was heavily affected by the influx of refugees in 2015, particularly as it is an entry point into the Schengen area. In the summer of 2015, thousands of asylum seekers crossed the border at Röszke every day. The majority of refugees either refused to register in Hungary and cooperate with the authorities, or registered and applied for asylum, but in most cases left the country before their application was assessed. By September 2, 2015, there were 159,968 illegal border crossings registered in Hungary, but only 148,643 asylum applications were received. On June 15, 2015, the Hungarian government announced the construction of a technical border lock along the southern border of Serbia to slow down the inflow.

By 2016, as a result of the tightening of the asylum procedures, it became almost impossible to obtain asylum in Hungary. Between January 1, 2015 and May 31, 2016, 194,831 decisions were made by the Office of Immigration and Nationality. Out of these, 97% of the procedures were terminated, mainly because the applicant left the country after registration. Of the 5,178

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<sup>23</sup> Data provided by Commissariat for Refugees and Migration for the period of 2014 to the first eight months in 2018.

<sup>24</sup> Juhasz, A. and Cs. Molnar (2017) Magyarország sajátos helyzete az európai menekültválságban. <http://old.tarki.hu/hu/publications/SR/2016/13juhasz.pdf>, Juhasz, A. and Cs. Molnar, E. Zgut. Menekültügy és migráció Magyarországon. [http://www.politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/HUNGARY\\_BOOK\\_HU\\_BOOK\\_ONLINE.pdf](http://www.politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/HUNGARY_BOOK_HU_BOOK_ONLINE.pdf)

substantive decisions, only 736 were positive, meaning that 86% of the decisions were negative.

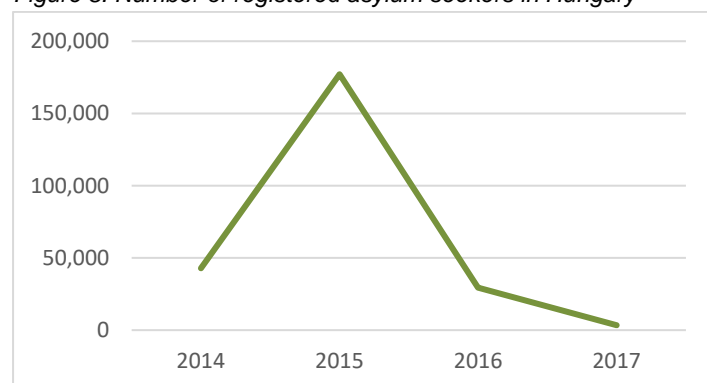
Since 2016, asylum applications of those who enter from Serbia can only be made in the transit zones in Röszke or Tompa (two villages on Hungary's southern border). Only a very small number of asylum seekers can apply during office opening hours. According to the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, since 2016 on average only 10 asylum seekers per day could enter the area in the Röszke and Tompa transit zones, which meant that the refugee system has practically ceased to exist in this region.

The table below presents the number of asylum seekers registered in Hungary between 2014 and 2017. It shows the significant increase in 2015 and a continuous decrease in 2016 and 2017 in light of the adopted policies.

*Table 2: Number of registered asylum seekers in Hungary*

<b>Year</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Number of registered asylum seekers	42,777	177,135	29,432	3,397
Difference in comparison with previous year	(+126%)	(+314%)	(-83%)	(-88%)

*Figure 8: Number of registered asylum seekers in Hungary*



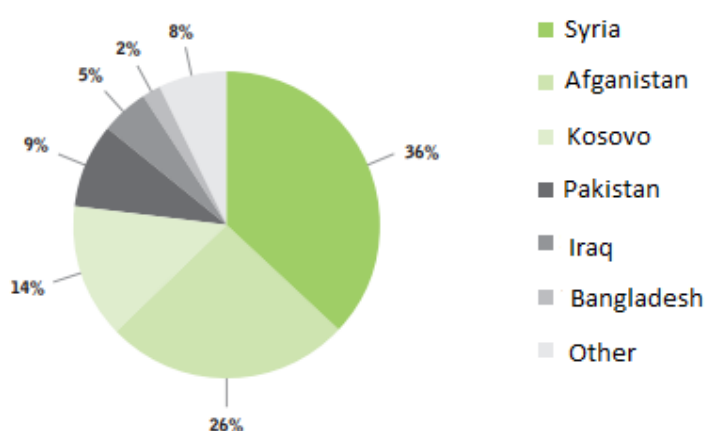
In 2018, further measures were put forward to tighten asylum procedures. In Röszke, only one person could enter the transit zone per day. NGOs and humanitarian organisations' aiming to help asylum seekers at the border tax burdens have been increased and the organisations were prevented from reaching the transit zones. As a result, in 2018, Hungary only received 367 refugees in total. This meant that in one year, the number of people admitted to the country decreased to one fifth of previous levels.<sup>25</sup> Stricter admission conditions are also reflected in the 2018 statistics. In the first nine months of the year, there were 560 pending applications, with refugee status granted to 354 people; in the last three months of the year, there were only 111 new applications, of which just 13 had a positive outcome. These included the former prime

<sup>25</sup> Index.hu (2019) Egy év alatt ötödére csökkent a Magyarországon befogadottak száma. [https://index.hu/belfold/2019/02/01/menekultstasz\\_magyarorszagon\\_befogadottak\\_szama\\_2018/](https://index.hu/belfold/2019/02/01/menekultstasz_magyarorszagon_befogadottak_szama_2018/)

minister of North Macedonia, Nikola Gruevski, who was convicted of corruption in his country of origin.

Between January 1, 2015 and May 31, 2016, the top five countries of origin of asylum seekers in Hungary were Syria (35%), Afghanistan (27%), Kosovo (13%), Pakistan (9%) and Iraq (6%). In the first half of 2018, 9% of the applicants came from Syria, 42% from Afghanistan, and 34% from Iraq. Out of the total, 55% were children, and 37% were women. The majority of applicants (86%) came from war or terror-stricken areas.<sup>26</sup> The figure below provides an overview of the nationalities of asylum applicants from 2015, when the number of applications in Hungary reached its peak.

Figure 9: Asylum applications in Hungary, 2015, by citizenship



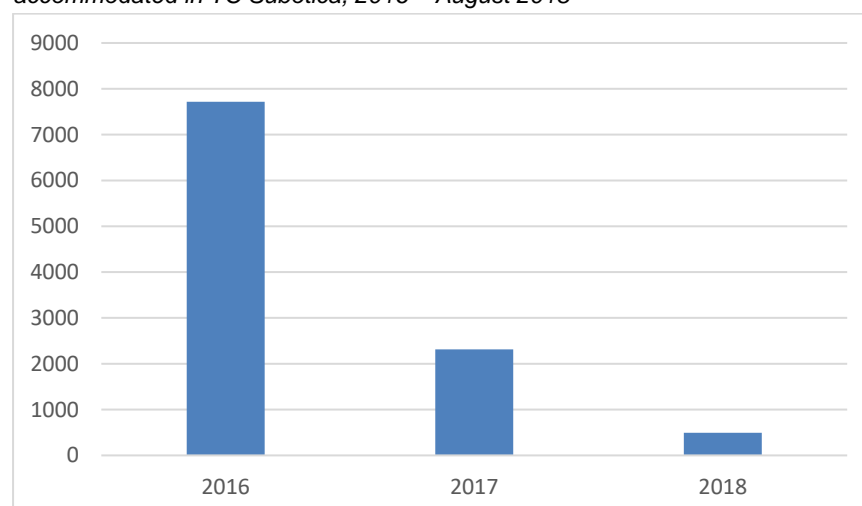
Source: Eurostat

On the Serbian side, as a response to the crisis, six reception centres have opened since 2015 in the Vojvodina province - RC Sombor, RC Kikinda, RC Subotica<sup>27</sup>, RC Adasevci, RC Principovac, and RC Sid. Given its proximity to the Hungarian border, Subotica is the municipality where the largest number of irregular migrants and asylum seekers have been present since the beginning of the crisis. Subotica's reception centre for migrants was opened on 16 November 2015 and was partially funded by the German humanitarian organisation Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB). Of the total number of migrants accommodated in the Vojvodina region in 2016, about 55% of them were in RC Subotica.

<sup>26</sup> Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2018) Magyar menekültügy a számok tükrében 2018. július 1. <https://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/Magyar-menekultugy-a-szamok-tukreben-2018-julius-1.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> In November 2015, the Reception Centre in Subotica was opened. After the border closing in 2016, it became the Transit Centre.

Figure 10: Number of migrants who expressed the intention to seek asylum and asylum seekers accommodated in TC Subotica, 2016 – August 2018



Source: Based on data provided from the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration

TC Subotica accommodated a total of 7,718 people in 2016, including around 600 people at one point, well above its capacity of 130. By nationality, the main groups of refugees were from Afghanistan (37.9%), Syria (23.34%) and Pakistan (14.94%). By gender, 77.29% were male and 22.71% were female. The majority of people were aged between 19-30 (45.05%) and 31-55 (19.26%). Out of 2,034 children, 201 were unaccompanied minors. There were 403 family units and 28 single persons.

In 2017, after the Hungarian border closure, the number of people accommodated in the TC significantly decreased – to 2,313 people in total. The breakdown by nationality was: Afghan (41.15%), Iraqi (29.53%) and Syrian (19.11%). Of the total, 60.31% were male and 39.68% female. All age cohorts were generally equally represented, at about 20%. There were 1,131 children and 191 unaccompanied minors. Family units were 410 and 36 single persons.

In the first eight months in 2018, TC Subotica accommodated 495 people. As in the previous years, Afghans were the main group (49.69%), followed by Iraqis (32.32%) and Syrians (7.47%). By gender, 61.82% were male and 38.18% female. All age cohorts were generally equally represented, at about 20%. More than 50% were children (271) and 11.72% (58) were unaccompanied minors. Family units were 80 and 63 single persons.

### 1.3 Challenges, opportunities and impacts

Due to its vicinity to the Hungarian border, Subotica is a municipality highly affected by migration flow, especially at the beginning of the migration crisis. It has been seen only as a transit destination. Migrants were passing through Subotica on their way to the European Union and the Schengen area.

The number of crossings along the Hungarian-Serbian border began steadily increasing before 2014 and reached its peak in 2015. In January and February of that year, a number of asylum-seeking families started to cross the border. At the peak of the inflow in summer 2015 thousands

of people were entering Hungary every day. The majority of these crossings constituted an illegal entry not through the designated border crossing but, for example, along the train tracks connecting Subotica with Szeged or fields used for growing crops. However, in these areas the interaction between locals and incoming asylum seekers was minimal.

The Hungarian national authorities set up a collection camp near Röszke to process the incoming masses. Once a person was processed, they received a train ticket together with instruction papers to take them to one of the reception centres located in other parts of the country. One of the criticisms was that these papers were only in Hungarian and the people did not receive adequate information and support regarding their situation. On the other hand, the incoming people were observed on a number of occasions in possession of maps highlighting the route they should take and what places to get around to avoid being sent back to Serbia.<sup>28</sup>

Once persons were processed, and in possession of a train ticket, they were taken to the train station in Szeged. Frequently, however, buses with the asylum seekers arrived after the last train of the day had left, leaving them stranded in the city centre for the night with no shelter. As a result, the local civic society and NGOs began to mobilise. An example of such activation is MigSzol Szeged<sup>29</sup>, a migrant solidarity group that was founded as a reaction to the humanitarian crisis caused by the influx of large numbers of people in a short period of time. In Szeged, the group provided legal advice, translation services, information, medical assistance, food and hygienic products. Later, support was extended to the collection camp, including among other things food packages distributed not only to the asylum seekers but also the staff of the national authorities stationed there.

The situation changed dramatically in September 2015 when Hungary completed the construction of a barbed-wire fence<sup>30</sup> along the border with Serbia and formed two transit zones at the Horgoš-Röszke and Kelebija-Tompa border crossing points. Since then, the number of asylum seekers arriving in Hungary dropped significantly as their entry into the country was restricted and entry quotas were introduced.

In 2016, Hungary further restricted its asylum policy and established an entry quota of 20 people per day from Serbia (10 per day each of the two border crossings). This was limited to only two people per day in 2018. If one family (5 people per border) is allowed to enter one day, there are no further entries for one week. As a consequence, a significant number of refugees tried to illegally cross the well-policed EU external borders with Serbia, mainly to Croatia and Hungary, but also to Romania. Serbian customs officials at the border crossings with Hungary often prevent attempts to cross illegally.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Information provided based on personal experience of the interviewees.

<sup>29</sup> MigSzol Szeged. <https://www.facebook.com/migszolszeged/>.

<sup>30</sup> Which is said to have cost taxpayers around EUR 26.4 million.

<sup>31</sup> Subotica.com portal, News "Migration Council was formed". <http://bit.ly/2Dgm0jS>.

From the Serbian side of the border, one of the main challenges in Subotica was the quick response to the mass influx of migrants and provision of first aid assistance. At the beginning of 2014, the Subotica Migration Council was formed. This consists of representatives of the local self-government and public institutions.<sup>32</sup> A Working Group for monitoring migration in the city was also established. The Working Group coordinates activities with the Government of Serbia, prevents humanitarian disaster and helps maintain security through cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Also in 2014, the Home for Children and Youth with Developmental Disabilities “Kolevka” was opened, the first and only one on the Balkan route, and cooperation with the NGO sector was established. In cooperation with international organisations and the Government of Serbia, a reception centre was opened under the authority of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration. In order to assist the city in dealing with the unprecedented migration crisis, many international and non-governmental organisations intervened and provided various types of assistance.

Illegal migration brought some challenges to Serbia, as well as to the City of Subotica. According to the Strategy for combating irregular migration for the period 2018-2020,<sup>33</sup> there are challenges related to migrants and their flow, i.e. to the number and structure of migrants in terms of status (share of irregular in the total number of migrants) and related risks (smuggling, trafficking in human beings and other criminal offences), origin and destination (countries they come from and move towards) and vulnerabilities (children, unaccompanied minors, women, victims of people trafficking, etc.). The second group of challenges is related to requirements to adapt the legal and political frameworks to the variable character of migration on one hand, as well as to the change in the political situation in the region and the world, on the other.

In that regard, Serbia began to harmonise its legislation with EU directives and regulations in the area of migration. Cooperation with the EU has been established on foreign policy, exchange of information and joint operational action for security and prevention of irregular migration. The Strategy emphasises that a number of steps must be taken to deter migrants from illegal entry into Serbia, ensure reception and protection of refugees, increase health and social support to vulnerable migrant categories, and combat migrant smuggling. These include, among others:

- reorganisation of competent services;
- additional training of employees;
- increased number of executors;
- procurement of advanced technologies to uncover illegal border crossing attempts; and

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<sup>32</sup> Subotica.com news (2014). Oformljen Savet za migracije. <http://bit.ly/2Dgm0jS>.

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Interior (2018) Strategy for combating irregular migration of the Republic of Serbia 2018-2022. <http://bit.ly/2GyZtSz>

- increased cooperation between the police and prosecutor's offices in the region.

All of these require significant financial, human and technical resources and in that domain, Serbia needs additional support.

There is limited information available on the financial impact of the influx at national and local level in Hungary and Serbia. With regard to the impact on public spending on integration and initial reception measures in Serbia, the general opinion is that there is a moderate decrease at national level, due to the investments in public infrastructure (waste management, water supply) and reception measures (health care, housing, basic education, social protection). Since 2015, the Republic of Serbia has received Madad<sup>34</sup> funding from the European Union. This covers:

- operating expenses;
- nutrition;
- provision of health services;
- access to education for refugee children; and
- improvement of the conditions for accommodation of people in need for international protection at reception centres.

The main bodies involved in Madad project implementation are the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (lead), the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education as well as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).<sup>35</sup> Madad provides EUR 8 per person per day for food and accommodation. Many other international organisations provided support of various kinds to public institutions all over the country.

In terms of the impact on public revenues in Serbia, municipalities where reception/asylum centres are located (i.e. Sid, Subotica, Presevo, Belgrade, Bujanovac, Tutin, Sjenica, etc.) may experience some positive effect on public revenues due to the increase in the number of jobs in the refugee protection sector. No data on the impact on public revenues in Hungary has been found.

In Serbia, there have been sporadic social tensions, mainly at the beginning of the migration crisis. For instance, there were some social tensions in municipalities where refugees and asylum seekers were/are situated (theft, burglary, etc), mainly in the municipality of Sid, Subotica, Kikinda. In Subotica, there were physical attacks as well as thefts, which caused tensions with the local population. There were no political tensions.

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<sup>34</sup> European Commission. EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis. [https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/content/home\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/content/home_en).

<sup>35</sup> Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy. Fond MADAD. <https://bit.ly/2MkcYcX>.

In Hungary, the position of the Government towards the refugee crisis and the EU's approach in this area has been well documented. Nonetheless, the establishment of groups such as MigSzol Szeged show differences in public opinion on how to respond to the crisis.

In 2014, a survey<sup>36</sup> of local views on migration was conducted in Moráhalom<sup>37</sup>, Röszke and Horgoš. This indicated that 58% of the respondents on the Serbian side would be disturbed or very disturbed by the presence of immigrants, but only 33% on the Hungarian side. However, when asked whether they agree with a statement that “people from different cultures have no place in our settlement”, 41% of all respondents completely disagreed with it.<sup>38</sup> A follow up survey was performed in 2016<sup>39</sup> and another round is being prepared to see how the opinions evolved through time.

## **1.4 Institutional and policy framework dealing with asylum seekers and refugees**

In the last few years, Hungary has introduced legislation to reduce access to asylum procedures and streamline support from NGOs while Serbia has aligned its legislation with the EU standards. The parts below describe the legislation currently in place connected to asylum seekers and refugees as well as the main actors providing support.

### **1.4.1 Hungary**

As a consequence of the large influx of irregular migrants in 2015, the Hungarian government amended its asylum legislation in July of that year. Changes were introduced to the main Asylum Act (Act LXXX. of 2007)<sup>40</sup> and the Government Decree on Asylum (301/2007. (XI.9))<sup>41</sup> that implements the Asylum Act. Further, a Government Decree 191/2015 (VII. 21.)<sup>42</sup> was issued establishing a National List of Safe Countries which included Serbia.<sup>43</sup> This meant that nearly all asylum applications made by people who entered the country through Serbia were automatically rejected. The changes shortened the period of asylum proceedings including the

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<sup>36</sup> Kriska O. and Gy. Nagy (2015): Menekültügyi helyzetkép Magyarországon és társadalmi megítélése a szerb–magyar határtérségben: 533-553. Tavasz Szél/Spring Wind Konferenciakötet I.

<sup>37</sup> A small city in Hungary in the proximity of the border.

<sup>38</sup> Kriska O. and Gy. Nagy (2015): 533-553.

<sup>39</sup> Results of this round are not publicly available.

<sup>40</sup> 2007. évi LXXX. Törvény a menedéjogról. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A0700080.TV>

<sup>41</sup> 301/2007. (XI. 9.) Korm. Rendelet a menedéjogról szóló 2007. évi LXXX. törvény végrehajtásáról. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A0700301.KOR>

<sup>42</sup> 191/2015. (VII. 21.) Korm. Rendelet a nemzeti szinten biztonságosnak nyilvánított származási országok és biztonságos harmadik országok meghatározásáról. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1500191.KOR>

<sup>43</sup> The changes were introduced through the adoption of Act CVI. of 2015, Act CXXVII. Of 2015, and Act CXL. Of 2015. <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1500106.TV>; <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1500127.TV>; and <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1500140.TV>.



deadlines for submitting an appeal.<sup>44</sup> The amendments also gave permission for the construction of transit zones (maximum 60 metres from the border) where all asylum procedures and asylum seekers were hosted.<sup>45</sup> On 15 September, two transit zones (Rösztke and Tompa) were opened and the Hungarian-Serbian border was closed to asylum seekers, leaving many stranded on the Serbian side. However, with the exception of about two weeks, the border remained open to regular legal crossings.

Changes to legislation continued in 2016, with further amendments of the Asylum Act (Act LXXX. of 2007), the implementing Government Decree (301/2007. (XI.9)) and the State Border Act (Act LXXXIX. of 2007).<sup>46</sup> The main changes included the termination of monthly cash allowances for asylum seekers and school enrolment benefit, the termination of specific support schemes facilitating integration of recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection.<sup>47</sup> Persons who are beneficiaries of international protection need to vacate the reception centres 30 days after reception of such status (previously it was 60 days).<sup>48</sup> The police became obliged by law to automatically return irregular migrants apprehended within 8 km of the Hungarian-Serbian or Hungarian-Croatian border to the other side of the border.<sup>49</sup>

In March 2017, Act XX. of 2017<sup>50</sup> was adopted introducing further amendments, for example, extending the 8 km rule, and broadening the conditions on which the government may order a state of emergency and what restrictions may be applied during such emergency.<sup>51</sup> Asylum seekers admitted to transit zones were detained and transit zones could only be left through the "exit" to Serbia or Croatia. Adult refugees, family refugees and children under 14 years were detained without any form of redress. The government introduced these rules with reference to

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<sup>44</sup> Gyollai, D. (2018) Hungary Country Report - Legal & Policy Framework of Migration Governance, RESPOND Working Papers Global Migration: Consequences and Responses, Paper 2018/05, May 2018. <http://www.crs.uu.se/respond/working-paper-series/>

<sup>45</sup> Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2015) No Country for Refugees – New asylum rules deny protection to refugees and lead to unprecedented human rights violations in Hungary. [https://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC\\_Hungary\\_Info\\_Note\\_Sept-2015\\_No\\_country\\_for\\_refugees.pdf](https://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC_Hungary_Info_Note_Sept-2015_No_country_for_refugees.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> 2007. évi LXXXIX. törvény az államhatáróról. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A0700089.TV>

<sup>47</sup> 62/2016. (III. 31.) Korm. Rendelet az egyes migrációs és menekültügyi tárgyú kormányrendeletek módosításáról. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1600062.KOR&timeshift=ffffff4&txreferer=00000001.TXT>

<sup>48</sup> 2016. évi XXXIX. Törvény egyes migrációs tárgyú és ezekkel összefüggésben más törvények módosításáról. <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1600039.TV>

<sup>49</sup> 2016. évi XCIV. Törvény a határon lefolytatott menekültügyi eljárás széles körben való alkalmazhatóságának megvalósításához szükséges törvények módosításáról. <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1600094.TV>

<sup>50</sup> 2017. évi XX. törvény a határőrizeti területen lefolytatott eljárás szigorításával kapcsolatos egyes törvények módosításáról. <https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1700020.TV&timeshift=ffffff4&txreferer=00000001.TXT>

<sup>51</sup> Gyollai, D. (2018) Hungary Country Report - Legal & Policy Framework of Migration Governance, RESPOND Working Papers Global Migration: Consequences and Responses, Paper 2018/05, May 2018. <http://www.crs.uu.se/respond/working-paper-series/>

the mass immigration crisis, although by that time there were only 300-400 asylum seekers in the country.<sup>52</sup>

In 2018, further measures were put forward to tighten the asylum procedures through Act VI. of 2018<sup>53</sup>. In Röszke, only one person could enter the transit zone per day and NGOs and humanitarian organisations aiming to help asylum seekers at the border were prevented from reaching the transit zones. The legislative package called “Stop Soros” was criticised by a number of international organisations and bodies.

In December 2015<sup>54</sup> and July 2017<sup>55</sup>, the European Commission commenced infringement procedures against Hungary regarding its asylum legislation and the Stop Soros package claiming that the adopted laws were in breach of the Asylum Procedures Directive (2013/32/EU)<sup>56</sup>, the Return Directive (2008/115/EC)<sup>57</sup>, the Reception Conditions Directive (2013/33/EU)<sup>58</sup>, the Directive on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings (2010/64/EU)<sup>59</sup>, and several provisions of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU<sup>60</sup>. The 2015 infringement procedure was referred to the Court of Justice of the European

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<sup>52</sup> Juhasz, A. and Cs. Molnar, E. Zgut (2017). Menekültügy és migráció Magyarországon. [http://www.politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/HUNGARY\\_BOOK\\_HU\\_BOOK\\_ONLINE.pdf](http://www.politicalcapital.hu/pc-admin/source/documents/HUNGARY_BOOK_HU_BOOK_ONLINE.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> 2018. évi VI. törvény egyes törvényeknek a jogellenes bevándorlás elleni intézkedésekkel kapcsolatos módosításáról. <https://mkogy.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=A1800006.TV>.

<sup>54</sup> European Commission (2015) Commission opens infringement procedure against Hungary concerning its asylum law. Press release Brussels, 10 December 2015. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6228\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6228_en.htm).

<sup>55</sup> European Commission (2017) INFRINGEMENTS - Hungary: Commission launches infringement procedure for law on foreign-funded NGOs. Press release Brussels, 13 July 2017. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-17-1982\\_en.htm/](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-1982_en.htm/)

<sup>56</sup> Eur-Lex. Directive 2013/32/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32013L0032>

<sup>57</sup> Eur-Lex. Directive 2008/115/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1494407384308&uri=CELEX:32008L0115>.

<sup>58</sup> Eur-Lex. Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1494407151974&uri=CELEX:32013L0033>

<sup>59</sup> Eur-Lex. Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1554300375823&uri=CELEX:32010L0064>

<sup>60</sup> Eur-Lex. (2012) Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>

Union on 19 July 2018<sup>61</sup>. In the 2017 procedure, the Commission sent a reasoned opinion to Hungary on 24 January 2019<sup>62</sup> to which the country had two months to respond.

Additionally, there are a number of cases pending in front of the European Court of Human Rights. On 14 March 2017 the European Court of Human Rights ruled in the *Case of Ilias and Ahmed v. Hungary*<sup>63</sup> that there had been a violation of several articles of the European Convention on Human Rights. The court found that the applicants' confinement in the Röszke border zone had amounted to detention, meaning they had effectively been deprived of their liberty without any formal, reasoned decision and without appropriate judicial review. It further concluded that the applicants' expulsion to Serbia was unlawful as they had not had the benefit of effective guarantees to protect them from exposure to a real risk of being subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment.<sup>64</sup>

The Hungarian Government and the Ministry of the Interior are the main policymaking bodies in the area of asylum and immigration. They work closely with the Ministry for National Economy, Ministry of Human Resources and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main organisation responsible for handling asylum applications is the Immigration and Asylum Office (IAO)<sup>65</sup> within the Ministry of the Interior. Since January 2002, the organisation of the IAO has been supplemented with regionally organised territorial bodies.

The IAO carries out the monitoring of migration to Hungary in close cooperation with the police and with civil and military national security services. It cooperates with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Foreign Representations in dealing with foreign affairs, with educational institutions for students, with labour centres for employees, and with professional advocacy bodies for investor affairs. The IAO maintains a relationship with the UNHCR Regional Office and the International Office of the IOM in the area of migration and asylum.

Up until October 2017, the IAO, the police and other national authorities had cooperation agreements in place with NGOs, such as the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, regarding

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<sup>61</sup> European Commission (2018) Migration and Asylum: Commission takes further steps in infringement procedures against Hungary. Press release Brussels, 19 July 2018. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-18-4522\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-4522_en.htm)

<sup>62</sup> European Commission (2019) Asylum: Commission takes next step in infringement procedure against Hungary for criminalising activities in support of asylum applicants. Press release Brussels, 24 January 2019. [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-19-469\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-19-469_en.htm)

<sup>63</sup> European Court of Human Rights (2017). Case of Ilias and Ahmed v. Hungary (Application no. 47287/15). <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22fulltext%22%3A%5B%5D%2C%22documentcollectionid%22%3A%5B%22CHAMBER%22%2C%22itemid%22%3A%5B%22001-172091%22%5D%7D>

<sup>64</sup> European Court of Human Rights (2017). Case of Ilias and Ahmed v. Hungary (Application no. 47287/15). <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22fulltext%22%3A%5B%5D%2C%22documentcollectionid%22%3A%5B%22CHAMBER%22%2C%22itemid%22%3A%5B%22001-172091%22%5D%7D>

<sup>65</sup> Bevándorlási és Menekültügyi Hivatal. <http://www.bmbah.hu/index.php?lang=hu>.

oversight of facilities run by the authorities and other support services provided to asylum seekers.<sup>66</sup>

#### 1.4.2 Serbia

In order to manage migration more effectively, Serbia has revised and adopted several laws regulating migration policy. A New Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection<sup>67</sup> was adopted on 22 March 2018. It is aligned with the international and EU standards, including an improved definition of a refugee; the introduction of an accelerated procedure, a border procedure and inadmissibility grounds; and enhanced provisions for unaccompanied and separated asylum-seeking children. The Law on Foreigners came into effect on 3 April 2018, with implementation starting in October 2018. The Law on the Employment of Foreigners<sup>68</sup> was updated in 2018 and regulates asylum seekers' right to labour market access. The Law on the Protection of State Borders (2018) refers to the border control and integrated border management. The Law on Migration Management adopted at the end of 2012 regulates migration management, principles, the authority responsible for migration management, and a unified system of data collection and exchange in the field of migration management. The Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Serbia regulates how citizenship may be acquired.

In addition to these laws, Serbia has adopted a number of strategies and action plans:

- The Response Plan in case of mass influx of migrants in the Republic of Serbia
- Action Plan for Chapter 24 of the EU Accession Talks<sup>69</sup> for harmonising migration with the *acquis* and the EU Directives
- Decree on Determining Programme of Incentives for the Implementation of Measures and Activities Necessary for Achieving the Established Goals in the Field of Migration Management in Local Government Unit (2018)<sup>70</sup>
- Decree on the Integration of Foreigners Granted Asylum in the Social, Cultural and Economic Life of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette, no. 101/2016, 56/2018)<sup>71</sup>
- Decree on Criteria for Establishing Priority Accommodation of Persons Recognised the Right to Refuge or Granted Subsidiary Protection and the Conditions for the Use of Temporary Housing (Official Gazette, no 63/15)<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2017) Authorities terminated cooperation agreements with the HHC. <https://www.helsinki.hu/en/authorities-terminated-cooperation-agreements-with-the-hhc/>

<sup>67</sup> UNHCR (2018) Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection. <https://bit.ly/2KZnmGv>.

<sup>68</sup> Paragraf (2018) Law on the Employment of Foreigners. <https://bit.ly/2NiQuoR>.

<sup>69</sup> Action Plan for Chapter 24 – Introduction. <https://bit.ly/2gWYeCp>.

<sup>70</sup> KIRS (2016). Decree on Determining Programme of Incentives for the Implementation of Measures and Activities Necessary for Achieving the Established Goals in the Field of Migration Management in Local Government Unit. <http://www.kirs.gov.rs/docs/uredbe/uredba%20o%20utvrdivanju%20programa%202016.pdf>.

<sup>71</sup> Decree on the integration: <https://bit.ly/2nTy0B2>.

<sup>72</sup> Decree on Criteria for Establishing Priority Accommodation: <https://bit.ly/2NUCzX6>.

- Migration Management Strategy (Official Gazette of the RS, no. 59/09)
- Strategy for the Integrated Border Management in the Republic of Serbia 2017-2020 (Official Gazette of the RS, no. 9. from 10 February 2017)<sup>73</sup> and Action Plan 2017-2020 (Official Gazette of the RS, no. 39. from 24 April 2017)<sup>74</sup>
- Strategy for Combating Illegal Migration in the Republic of Serbia 2009-2014
- Strategy for Combating Illegal Migration in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2020<sup>75</sup>
- Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Humans, Especially Women and Children, and Protection of the Victims 2017-2022 <sup>76</sup>

The Ministry of the Interior's Department for Foreigners is in charge of the registration of people who express the intention to seek asylum. Within 72 hours of registration, the asylum seeker should go to the assigned Asylum/Reception Centre. Within 15 days of the date of registration, the person should submit an asylum application to the Asylum Office. If this is not possible, persons can submit asylum application in writing by eight days after the first 15 days. *The Asylum Office* is responsible for the first-instance asylum procedure. *The Department of Borders* is in charge of the organisation and control of the state border. The Asylum Commission is in charge of the second-instance asylum procedure and the Administrative Court is in charge of the onward appeals procedure. A foreigner whose asylum application has been refused or rejected should leave the country within the specified time limit.

The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration provides temporary accommodation for asylum seekers in Asylum Centres and for refugees transiting Serbia in Reception Centres. This institution is also in charge of accommodation and integration of persons granted asylum or subsidiary protection. In addition, the Commissariat shall implement programmes of voluntary return of foreigners whose application has been refused or rejected.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy is in charge of providing social assistance to asylum seekers. *Social Work Centres* are in charge of unaccompanied minors. The Ministry of Health is responsible for providing healthcare to asylum seekers and refugees. The Ministry of Education is responsible for enrolling asylum seekers and refugees in school or further/higher education.

Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows - Upon the increased influx of refugees in Serbia, the Government established a Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows in June 2015 and adopted a Response Plan in case of mass influx of migrants in the Republic of Serbia in September 2015. The Working Group is an inter-municipal body which coordinates the activities of the response plan. It consists of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Commissariat for Refugees and

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<sup>73</sup> Strategy for the Integrated Border Management 2017-2020: <http://bit.ly/2EN9Qkm>.

<sup>74</sup> Action Plan for the Integrated Border Management 2017-2020: <http://bit.ly/2Ex2Dni>.

<sup>75</sup> Strategy for Combating Illegal Migration 2018-2020: <http://bit.ly/2GyZtSz>.

<sup>76</sup> Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Humans 2017–2022: <http://bit.ly/2J0Z8e9>.

Migration, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and other relevant governmental bodies.

Furthermore, civil society and international organisations are also very significant stakeholders in migration management.

At local level, in 2014, Subotica formed a Migration Council. It consists of representatives of the local self-government and relevant institutions. A working group was also established to monitor migration in the city.

The most relevant policy is the Response Plan for an Increased Number of Migrants on the Territory of the Republic of Serbia. The Plan outlines the main actors, activities and resources required to accommodate up to 6,000 people. The Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows in Serbia is responsible for the response plan. UNHCR and IOM are supporting this process.

At the local level, there are Local Action Plans to address the issue of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees under the readmission agreement. Those documents did not cover the needs of the categories of asylum seekers and people with granted asylum status, but only refugees from the 1990s. More recently, several Local Action Plans have been revised and newly adopted to include measures that target those categories, including that of Subotica.

The Ministry of Education prepared professional instructions for inclusion of refugee/asylum seeking students in the system of education and upbringing, which has been forwarded to all schools in Serbia. According to this instruction each school should develop a Schools Support Plan. Expert Teams for inclusive education (which are established in each school) shall draw up a School Support Plan for the inclusion of refugee/asylum seeking pupils.

Individual integration plans for each foreigner who is granted asylum should be developed, according to new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration should develop this individual integration plan based on the Integration Decree.

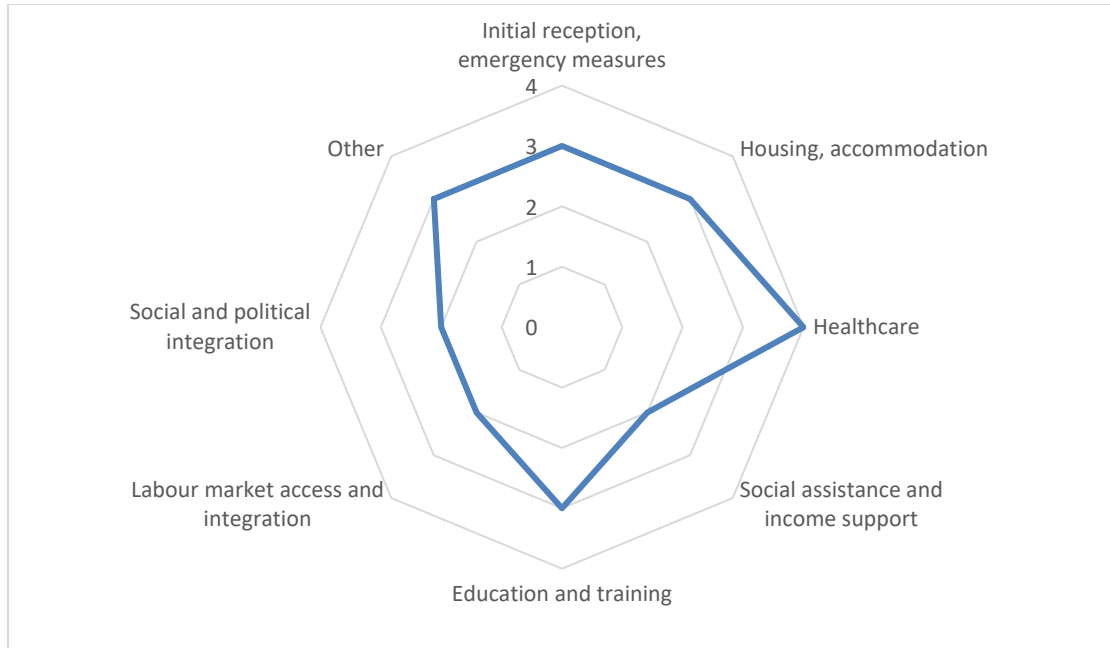
There is room for improvement of the integration system in Serbia. According to the Decree on the Integration and new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, each beneficiary of this type of protection should have an Individual Integration Plan. "However, there is no practice of the State that pertains to the procedures for naturalisation, permanent residence and family reunification, as well as for issuance of travel documents as yet. This means that the development of an integration system in Serbia for the persons awarded international protection is still at its early stages".<sup>77</sup>

The figure below presents an assessment of the policies in place in Serbia.

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<sup>77</sup> Action Document for EU Trust Fund to be used for the decisions of the Operational Board. <https://bit.ly/2wd3565>.

Figure 11: Radar chart of policies in place in Serbia



**Legend:**

0 no policy in this domain

1 there is a policy, however, information on the policy results achieved are not available

2 information on the policy results is available and they show relevant problems in terms of effectiveness and/or efficiency

3 information on the policy results is available and shows positive trends; the policy is perceived as able to address the problem in an effective or efficient way

4 the policy in this domain is a good practice/a benchmark.

## **2 Analysis of selected policies/challenges**

In this section, the particular focus of this case study will be presented. Consecutively, the topic and motivation for the choice, the objectives and logic of the intervention, the actors involved, the implementation and the outcomes, impacts and results will be discussed.

### **2.1 Topic and motivation**

During the “long summer of migration” of 2015, more than 400,000 people followed the Balkan route into the EU, mainly crossing the small stretch of the Serbian-Hungarian border where the town of Röszke is located. As the first point of entry to Hungary (and also Schengen and the EU), spontaneous solidarity groups emerged along the route within Hungary, for example MigSzol Szeged in Szeged, the first large town after the border. After the closure of the border, Horgoš-Röszke became a transit zone, one of only two points of entry along the Serbian-Hungarian border. The control of the movements of asylum seekers was so regulated that it amounted to detention.<sup>78</sup>

This part of the case study focuses on the action of various actors at the height of the migrant crisis, and the impact that the entry restrictions and transit zones introduced by the Hungarian government had in Serbia, particularly in the border city of Subotica.

### **2.2 Objectives and logic of intervention**

Subotica’s vicinity to the main border crossing points with Hungary, Horgoš and Kelebija, made it the main exit point for migrants since 2011, even before the beginning of the refugee crisis. However, with the opening of the Western Balkans route in 2015, Subotica faced an enormous number of migrants fleeing war and persecution, mainly transiting through the city on their way to EU countries.

An abandoned brick factory and the main bus station became the main places where migrants would informally gather and stay. Migrants also camped in forest, meadows, vineyards and abandoned summer houses near the Horgoš and Kelebija border crossings. It is estimated that from June to September 2015 there were around 1,500 migrants in Subotica daily, causing a high pressure on national and local authorities. At that time, there was an urgent need for humanitarian aid. In November 2015, the reception centre in Subotica was opened close to the old brick factory, yet even today some migrants remain in illegal camps.

The situation drastically changed in August 2015, when Hungary started to implement a restrictive asylum policy and construct a barbed-wire fence along the border with Serbia. The new Hungarian law on asylum foresaw restrictive penalties for illegal crossing of the state

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<sup>78</sup> IOM (2017) Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean – Compilation of available data and information. [http://migration.iom.int/docs/Flows\\_Compilation\\_Report\\_December\\_2017\\_%20.pdf](http://migration.iom.int/docs/Flows_Compilation_Report_December_2017_%20.pdf). and Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2017). Hungary: Law on automatic detention of all asylum seekers in border transit zones enters into force, despite breaching human rights and EU law. Available at: <http://www.helsinki.hu/wp-content/uploads/HHC-Info-Update-rule39.pdf>.



border and illegal stay in Hungary. These factors significantly changed the dynamics of the transitions and thus, aggravated the situation.

In the middle of September 2015, the border was officially closed. The new situation led to protests by migrants at the Horgoš and Kelebija border crossings. For 10 days the Horgoš border crossing was also closed for regular/legal migration. Migrants spent several nights at the newly formed transit zones at the border, in the absence of basic living conditions.

Between October 2015 to March 2016, the number of migrants in Subotica and Kanjiža fell significantly. Nevertheless, the closure of the EU border in March 2016 again attracted a significant number of migrants to the Serbian-Hungarian border. Some of these people stayed in the centre of Subotica, while others stayed in abandoned buildings close to the border. When the Hungarian police allowed 150-200 people to cross the border in one day, it encouraged migrants to again come to Subotica and surrounding areas.

In April 2016, Hungary introduced a daily quota, allowing 30 people per day to enter and claim asylum at Horgoš-Röszke and one other border crossing. The closure of the Western Balkans route led to an increase in the number of people stranded in Serbia. From April to October 2016, there were more than 1,000 people in tents at the Horgoš transit zone, more than 500 in Kelebija, and up to 600 in the transit centre in Subotica, which only had capacity for 130 people. Many of them were crossing the border illegally. In July 2016, a new Hungarian law allowed the police to return asylum seekers that entered the country illegally. There were many cases where migrants (including women and children as well) suffered serious physical injuries when sent back by the Hungarian police.

In summer 2016, Hungary further restricted its asylum policy and set an entry quota of 20 people per day coming from Serbia (10 at each border crossing: Horgoš and Kelebija). Leaders of the migrant communities helped to prepare a 'Hungarian list' of refugees allowed to cross the border to claim asylum each day, in line with the quota.

To relieve the pressure on the transit zones and ameliorate the migrants' bad living conditions, the Serbian Commissariat and relevant ministries made major efforts to transfer people to reception and transit centres in Serbia. To reduce the number of migrants in the transit zones, it became obligatory to first report to one of the transit or reception centres (e.g. TC Subotica) to join a waiting list for the transit zones. As a result, the number of migrants in the Horgoš transit fell from 470 on 1 August 2016, to 172 at the end of that month; the population in the Kelebija-Tompa transit zone decreased by 179 to 100 in the same period. By the end of November 2016, there were 97 people in Kelebija and 57 in Horgoš.<sup>79</sup>

Despite these efforts, many migrants remained outside the system, and stayed away from the reception/transit centres. This was especially problematic in winter.

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<sup>79</sup> Corridor of Hope (2017) Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance: 61. <http://bit.ly/2SWjNjk>.

Non-governmental organisations report that the ‘Hungarian list’ system was badly organised and lacks transparency. Many asylum seekers were unaware that they needed to register on the list, in addition to expressing an intention to seek asylum in Serbia. Registration for the list was open to manipulation by the migrants in charge of the process. There is a lack of cooperation between authorities in Serbia and Hungary, even though the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration has the access to the lists, which they use to notify asylum seekers accommodated in the different centres in Serbia that it is their turn to cross the border and to go to TC Subotica.

The system of requiring an expression of intention with the possibility of enrolling on a waiting lists for admission to Hungary (with no real intention for asylum) has led to inaccurate statistics about the true number of asylum seekers in Serbia.

Another major problem is the unclear legal status of the refugees waiting to cross the border (as opposed to the small number that submitted an official asylum request in Serbia and entered the procedure).<sup>80</sup>

Serbian authorities have publicly criticised Hungary’s restrictive asylum policy. Today, the number of crossings is restricted to one person per crossing point per day, or one family per week, which is the more common practice. The TC Subotica only houses asylum seekers who are on the list, waiting to cross the border. There are currently no migrants in transit zones, yet there are still illegal crossings and cases of smuggling. There are around 150 irregular migrants in Subotica and in the village of Horgoš near the border. In Kelebija there are almost no migrants.

The Republic of Serbia, through the Commissariat for Refugees and Migrations and local authorities, has provided support to asylum seekers and refugees in Subotica and Kanjiža. Nevertheless, the crisis response would not be nearly as effective without the support of many international and non-governmental organisations.

### **2.3 The actors**

Similar types of actors are involved in the provision of assistance and support to asylum seekers in Serbia and Hungary, but there is very little ongoing cooperation between the two sides.

On the Hungarian side, the main actor involved in implementing the national immigration and asylum policy is the Dél-Alföld Regional Office of Immigration and Asylum Office. With the support of the police, it is responsible for enforcing national laws and decrees connected to immigration and asylum issued by the Hungarian Government and the Ministry of the Interior.

At the height of the migrant crisis in 2015, a migrant support group MigSzol Szeged was constituted to help deal with the situation. MigSzol Szeged worked with and alongside national authorities and the city of Szeged, UNHCR and other non-governmental organisations to ensure that the humanitarian crisis in the area was dealt with quickly and with as much dignity

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid: 64.

as possible for the affected migrants. The support provided included food and sanitary products, medical checks, toys for children and legal counsel.

While the Hungarian Helsinki Committee did not actively participate in providing humanitarian support, an agreement was put in place with the government to provide legal support and counsel and monitor the situation in all reception centres in the country. This support could, however, only begin once a person has started the asylum process, i.e. submitted an asylum application.

The establishment of transit zones and the gradual introduction of entry quotas by the Hungarian Government has changed the situation for actors. The Dél-Alföld Regional Office of IAO, in cooperation with the police, is tasked with operating the transit zones in Röszke and Tompa. As the centres in the transit zone are isolated a very limited number of outside actors are allowed access to the zone. One of the bodies allowed to enter is the UNHCR, which continues to provide support to the asylum seekers and visit them in the centres. UNHCR also provides support and monitors the situation on the Serbian side of those preparing to enter the transit zones. Further support to those awaiting the outcome of their asylum procedure is provided by the members of the Charity Council - Caritas Hungarica, Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta, Hungarian Interchurch Aid, Hungarian Red Cross, Hungarian Reformed Church Aid, and Hungarian Baptist Aid.

As the humanitarian crisis has passed, MigSzol Szeged has stopped providing support, since it does not wish to duplicate already existing services.

As previously mentioned, the Hungarian Government has terminated its agreement with the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, whose staff no longer have access to the transit zone centres. The only exception is when an asylum seeker chooses a legal counsel from a pre-approved list who is a member of the Committee.

On the Serbian side, at the beginning of the migration crisis and the opening of the Balkan route, different actors were present in Subotica and Kanjiža. Apart from national and local authorities, many international organisations, non-governmental and volunteer organisations provided humanitarian assistance to migrants who were transiting through Serbia. During the mass influx of migrants in 2015, many organisations established operational teams in Subotica, working on different issues in line with the needs of migrants.

As mentioned in section 1.4.2, on the national level, the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia is the central institution in charge of accommodation of asylum seekers and refugees and their integration into society. According to the Law on Migration Management, the Commissariat is responsible for proposing objectives and priorities of migration policy to the Government, including measures designed to have a positive effect on legal migration and to suppress illegal migration. In addition, the institution is in charge of determining, proposing and undertaking measures for the integration of persons who have been granted asylum and implementation of programmes of voluntary return of a foreigner whose

application was refused or rejected by a decision of the competent authority. The Commissariat is monitoring the implementation of migration policies, collecting data and drafting the Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia.

The main partner of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration is the European Union.<sup>81</sup> Since 2015, the EU supports the institution through the Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis – the “Madad Fund“. The Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs is in charge of the implementation of the Madad Fund. In addition, the Commissariat is supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), GIZ, the Embassy of the Czech Republic in Serbia, and the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Serbia, among others. UNHCR is one of the main partners in charge of monitoring migration activities. In Subotica, the Commissariat manages the transit centre: accommodation, food, clothes, psychosocial support, education (formal and non-formal) and health protection. The City of Subotica and local public institutions are working closely with the Commissariat, as well as all international and non-governmental organisations. In order to provide assistance in TC Subotica, all actors engaged in humanitarian support must have permission from the Commissariat.

In 2015 the Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina established a Provincial Migration Council, a working body that proposed a programme, measures and action plans to be undertaken to make migration management more efficient in the territory of Vojvodina. The Roske-Horgoš Regional Border Police Centre is in charge of the following:

- surveillance of the state border;
- border checks;
- international waterway security on the rivers Danube and Tisa;
- suppression of cross-border crime;
- risk analysis;
- control of the flow and residence of foreigners;
- combating people trafficking; and
- asylum.

In line with the Law on Migration Management (Article 12), Subotica established a Migration Council which is responsible for local monitoring and reporting to the Commissariat, and proposes programmes, measures and plans of activities to be undertaken for the efficient management of migration. The Migration Council consists of representatives of the local

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<sup>81</sup> Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia (2016) Factsheet: Ongoing EU support to Serbia in addressing migration flows. <http://bit.ly/2Tzki81>.

government and other public institutions dealing with migration issues at the local level. The members of the Council are: the Mayor of the City of Subotica (president), the member of the City Council in charge of social protection and health care, representatives of the Centre for Social Work, police administration, national employment service, city administration, Subotica health centre, the Refugee Commissioner, and the Chairman of the Working Group for migration monitoring in Subotica.

Subotica also formed a working group for migration monitoring. Its members are also representatives of the city council and local public institutions (Centre for Social Work, health centre, police administration), Red Cross Subotica and representatives of Kolevka (the Home for Children and Youth with Developmental Disabilities).

The Municipality of Kanjiža is in charge of migration management in its territory. In cooperation with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and other relevant institutions, the Municipality opened the Vasariste temporary reception centre in 2015.

The Centres for Social Work in Subotica and Kanjiža, part of the Provincial Institute for Social Protection, are the public institutions responsible for processing asylum applications, deciding on income support for asylum seekers and refugees, and providing protection of unaccompanied minors. The centre in Subotica coordinates the accommodation of women and children in Kolevka with representatives of police and health institutions. Four primary schools in Subotica provide classes (mainly workshops) three times a week for children in TC Subotica.

The General Hospital and Subotica health centre provide health protection to asylum seekers and refugees in the city, as well as to irregular migrants at the Horgoš and Kelebija border crossing points. The accommodation of asylum seekers involves a compulsory medical examination. Kanjiža health centre provides medical assistance to asylum seekers and refugees in the municipality.

The Subotica and Kanjiža police administrations are in charge of issuing the 'Intention to Seek Asylum Certificate' as required by the Law on Asylum of the Republic of Serbia. They also refer asylum seekers to asylum centres, where the asylum procedure continues. The Border Police prosecutes irregular migrants who are staying illegally in the territory of the Republic of Serbia or illegally crossing the border. The communal police are in charge of securing public order and responding to breaches of the peace.

Kolevka a social and health institution that provides care for children and youth with disabilities. It has been renovated with the financial support of the Swiss Cooperation Office in Serbia in order to provide accommodation for unaccompanied minors.

Other public institutions, such as the public utility company, national employment service – Subotica branch, and Subotica Youth Office are also involved in migration management in Subotica.

Red Cross Subotica and Red Cross Kanjiža are some of the main local organisations in charge of providing humanitarian aid to migrants in Subotica and Kanjiža. From August 2016 until July

2018, Red Cross Subotica delivered food to asylum seekers living in TC Subotica, prepared by the Red Cross Public Kitchen. Since July 2018, it provides occasional advisory services to parents and children living in the transit centre.

UNHCR has an important role in monitoring and supporting refugee protection and humanitarian needs in Subotica and Kanjiža. Through implementing partners (Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance – HCIT; Crisis Response and Policy Centre – CRPC; Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR); Danish Refugee Council (DRC), etc.), UNHCR provides assistance in the following areas:

- legal assistance;
- information and counselling;
- protection services;
- emergency aid (water, food, non-food items); and
- interpretation and cultural mediation, etc.

Other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS supported the development of local infrastructure in Subotica, capacity building of local institutions dealing with migrations, protection of asylum seekers, refugees and unaccompanied minors, and provided food, water, health protection and other forms of support.

Caritas Subotica, in cooperation with the Commissariat, began providing transportation from TC Subotica to the Horgoš border crossing point from the beginning of 2018. It also provides water, hygiene products and other support (printers, tools, gas) to TC Subotica.

Many other international organisations directly supported asylum seekers and refugees, providing different kind of assistance and services, including to the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, City of Subotica and local public institutions through investment in local infrastructure, purchasing of equipment and capacity-building activities. These include the following:

- European Union (Madad Fund, ECHO<sup>82</sup>);
- IOM;
- USAID;
- Swiss Cooperation Office Serbia;
- Save the Children;
- Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund;
- Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – Doctors without borders;

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<sup>82</sup> Directorate-General of the European Commission for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.

- Médecins du Monde (MDM) – Doctors of the world;
- East European Missions Network;
- International Rescue Committee (IRC);
- Konrad Adenauer Foundation;
- Terre Des Homes;
- SOS children's villages;
- HELP;
- Initiative for Development and Cooperation (IDC); and
- many other volunteer organisations.

Direct support to the asylum seekers, refugees and migrants provided by non-governmental organisations (national and local) was very significant in Subotica and Kanjiža, especially during 2015 and 2016. The Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation provided direct humanitarian aid to asylum seekers and migrants, support to the local community through training and procurement of emergency equipment, and donations to soup kitchens and community health centres. The Foundation provided grant support for five civil society organisations from Subotica dealing with migration issues.

The Asylum Protection Centre, Department in Subotica, has an active role in collecting clothes, shoes and food and providing other assistance (legal advice, information) to migrants living in Subotica and northern border areas. All members of the department visit settlements where migrants are staying almost daily.

The NGO Atina is engaged in fighting people trafficking and all forms of gender-based violence, as well as providing assistance to refugees (protection and representation), in particular female refugees and children.

Group 484 provided humanitarian aid during 2015, different types of workshops and street actions, as well as capacity-building activities for local authorities, NGOs and other actors dealing with migration issues.

The Humanitarian Centre Novi Sad is involved in providing humanitarian aid (food, clothing and footwear, hygienic products), health and psychosocial support to mothers and children.

Since 2016, the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation has an important role in working with migrant children within the Children's corner in TC Subotica. The Local Democracy Agency (LDA) and many other NGOs also played an important role in response to migration crisis in Subotica.

Please see Annex III: Networking for additional information on actors and their roles in the emergency intervention in Subotica.

The following graph represents the policy network of 19 actors in Subotica. These were identified through documentation and interviews, and thus the relations could be underrepresented. However, the network is quite complex and different types of actors (bureaucrats, politicians, experts and diffused interest) at different territorial levels (international, national and local) have been involved in addressing the emergency. The two main actors are the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia and the City of Subotica. The working group for monitoring migration in Subotica, the Subotica Centre for Social Work and Subotica Migration Council (within the local self-government) and other local actors also play a central role in the relations among actors.

Figure 12: Relationship matrix among actors in Subotica

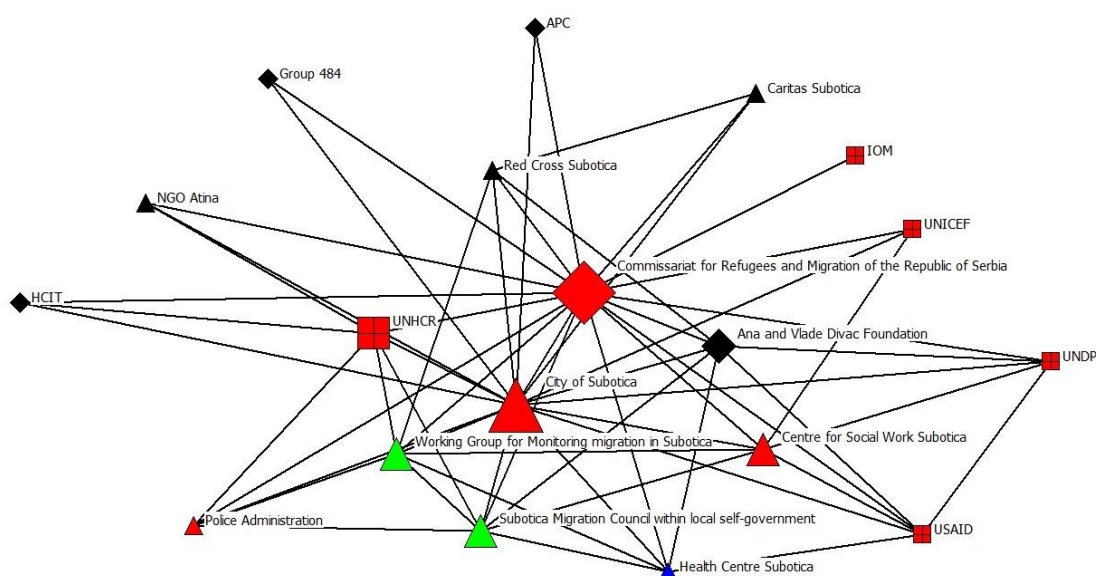


Figure 13: Graph Labels

Type of actor (Colour)	Central or secondary actor based on 'betweenness' (Dimension)	Territorial (Shape)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: red;">●</span> Bureaucrats</li> <li><span style="color: green;">●</span> Politicians</li> <li><span style="color: blue;">●</span> Experts</li> <li><span style="color: yellow;">●</span> Special interest</li> <li><span style="color: black;">●</span> Diffused interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> Central actor</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; opacity: 0.5;"></span> Secondary actor</li> </ul> <p>In each graph all the actors involved in the programming or implementation phase of the project/policy are represented, even if isolated (usually top left) in one of the phases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">+</span> International</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">◇</span> National</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">○</span> Regional</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid black; width: 20px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;">△</span> Local</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Implementation

With the closure of the Western Balkans route in 2016, the number of persons stranded in Serbia increased and the situation has thus evolved from an emergency crisis situation to the one that requires additional efforts from the authorities and donors, as well, to meet more medium to long term needs. As previously stated, in 2017 and 2018, the Government of the



Republic of Serbia adopted new laws and strategies to improve asylum procedures and the situation of asylum seekers and refugees in the country. The Serbian authorities have made considerable efforts to strengthen capacity for the reception and care of migrants, opening a total of 19 reception and transit centres<sup>83</sup> with capacity for 6,000 people.

As a response to the mass influx of migrants in Subotica, on 16 November 2015, the Republic of Serbia opened a reception centre close to the old brick factory, where migrants informally gathered. The City of Subotica was ceded land and the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund provided financial support for the construction of the centre. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration is in charge of management and coordinates all humanitarian assistance there. Even though the capacity of the centre is 130 people, at the time of large inflow (April-October 2016) there were up to 600 people accommodated in the centre and in the yard (in tents). Many international and non-governmental organisations provided humanitarian aid and other assistance, and the Commissariat provided additional staff. Different types of services and assistance were provided in the centre at this time: language learning, medical assistance, psychosocial support, workshops for mothers and children (painting, photography, etc.). In 2016 the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation (EHO) established the children's corner, a place where recreational activities and psychological support for children is provided. Unlike in 2016, today, the centre has sufficient capacity for the number of migrants needing to use it.<sup>84</sup>

Between January 2016 and March 2019, around 18,500 people in total stayed in TC Subotica. The centre is now purely a transit (not reception) centre, where asylum seekers from other centres in Serbia come to wait for their turn to cross the border. They stay in the centre for around 3 months on average. According to the established practice, asylum seekers who speak Arabic cross the Kelebija border point and the ones who speak Farsi cross through Horgoš. In cooperation with the Commissariat, Caritas Subotica provides transport to the Horgoš crossing point, while asylum seekers going to Kelebija use a bus or taxi (since it is not far away from the TC).

On 10 March 2019, there were 64 asylum seekers living in TC Subotica (38 Afghans, 18 Iraqis, 4 Iranians, and 4 Tajiks). Out of this number, 14 were men, 15 women and 35 were children. Currently, only families are accommodated in TC Subotica (14 in total). Since summer 2018, food is distributed by Oxfam, which currently leads the consortium of NGOs (CARE, Caritas, Oxfam, Serbian Red Cross) delivering food to reception and transit centres using the Madad Fund. At present, the International Aid Network provides psychiatric services, Catholic Relief Services provides healthcare (8 hours daily), and Red Cross Subotica provides advisory services. UNHCR visits the centre once a week and IOM is present every day.

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<sup>83</sup> At the moment, there are five centres for asylum (funded by the state) and 14 temporary centres (11 functional and 3 temporarily closed) financed by EU Madad fund.

<sup>84</sup> When it is possible, each family has a separate room. An unaccompanied minor has also its own room.

The general opinion is that the City of Subotica was well organised during the crisis and responded to the needs of migrants, both in the centre and those staying in illegal camps in the city and near the border. Several public institutions are involved in dealing with the migration crisis: The local self-government, Centre for Social Work, police administration, general hospital and health centre, and the public utility company. In 2015 and 2016, when a large number of migrants were present in Subotica and at the border crossing points, the working group for migration monitoring was very active and organised monthly meetings.

With a decrease in the number of migrants, this working group meets occasionally. Local authorities have participated in different projects of international and non-governmental organisations aimed at increasing their capacity to manage the migrant crisis. The work of the general hospital and health centre in Subotica is especially praised. They have responded in a timely fashion, especially when there were cases of physical violence by Hungarian police at the border and fights among migrants. The Centre for Social Work in Subotica was regularly short of manpower, so in 2017, UNICEF supported the institution with several outreach field workers from Subotica that were engaged in monitoring of the situation and providing protection for unaccompanied minors. Later, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy continued to support these workers through the Madad fund.

The Centre for Social Work in Subotica was not always responsive to the calls of the TC Subotica and non-governmental organisations in cases of unaccompanied minors. There were some unaccompanied minors staying outside the centre without guardians. Primary schools in Subotica are also included in migration management. Due to the short stay in TC Subotica, children from the centre are not going to school. However, teachers from four primary schools come three times per week to give lessons (mainly workshops). The communal police were helped to secure public order, especially at the Subotica bus station, one of the informal places where migrants gathered.

In regard to local policies, according to the Law on Asylum, local self-governments (Migration Councils) are obliged to adopt a Local Action Plan (LAP) that determines the needs of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, migrants without legal status and asylum seekers. They must also define measures, activities and funds to improve the situation of these persons. In December 2017, Subotica Town Assembly adopted an LAP for improving the status of refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees under the readmission agreements for the 2017-2021 period.<sup>85</sup> This document also refers to asylum seekers and migrants without legal status, with defined objectives for improvement of their position in society. However, a major disadvantage of the plan is its lack of specific activities to achieve its objectives. Certainly, this action plan obviously relies on experiences from the planning and implementation of the previous local action plan which had been in force from 2014-2016.<sup>86</sup> No other local policies on

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<sup>85</sup> City of Subotica (2017) LAP for improving the status of refugees, internally-displaced persons and returnees under the readmission agreements for the 2017-2021. <http://bit.ly/2HiaqbD>.

<sup>86</sup> Group 484 (2018) Migration challenges, local policies and civic participation: 90.

migration have been adopted.

Local institutions in Kanjiža appear to have been involved in the migration crisis to a lesser extent than those in Subotica. The local public utility company was engaged in waste collection from the Kanjiža temporary reception centre and from transit zones. The Kanjiža Centre for Social Work also received UNICEF support and hired 2-3 outreach social workers. Red Cross Kanjiža distributed aid at transit zones at one point. The Commissariat has two workers in charge of monitoring of the situation in Kanjiža.

The support of the international community and NGOs in Subotica and Kanjiža was highly significant, especially at the border crossing points during the mass influx. NGOs were generally directly involved in the distribution of humanitarian and other assistance, while international organisations were involved in monitoring and take an active role in providing and funding humanitarian support. Humanitarian assistance was provided to all migrants, regardless of status. Capacity-building activities were also organised for local authorities and other actors, supported by different donors. In 2015 and 2016, there was a significant presence of donors and NGOs. When the migration route was redirected towards Sid and the Croatian border, those actors also followed this movement and provided the necessary support.

## **2.5 Outcomes, impacts, and results of specific policy**

The mass influx of migrants in Subotica has improved the capacity of local institutions to deal with migration crises and contributed in some extent to local economic development. Thanks to the significant funds, there were investments in local infrastructure, hiring of the local population to deal with migration issues and a contribution to the local business.

In order to respond adequately to the crisis, local institutions participated in many capacity-building activities organised by international and non-governmental organisations. Among these was a three-day 'training for capacity building' of local communities in response to the emergency. Held in Subotica, it was attended by members of Subotica Migration Council. A training session was organised by the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation with the support of USAID in Serbia,<sup>87</sup> within the "Support for local response to refugee crisis project".

The Divac Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) donated 1 million dinars' (approximately EUR 8,122) worth of kitchen equipment to the Subotica Red Cross Public Kitchen. The donation allows Vojvodina's biggest public kitchen to prepare 400 additional meals per day and to create conditions to certify one part of the kitchen as meeting Halal standards. Enhancing the kitchen's capacity to prepare and deliver more meals to families in Subotica, will improve the quality of community services in Subotica.<sup>88</sup> In-kind support was also provided: snow blowing/cleaning machines to TC Subotica, EKG medical

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<sup>87</sup> Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation (2016) Training for capacity building of local communities in response to emergency began today in the city of Subotica. <http://bit.ly/2UzZjyz>

<sup>88</sup> Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation, Support for local response to refugee crisis (2016-2017). <http://bit.ly/2TjXkSt>.

devices for the health centre, and furniture and computers for primary schools.<sup>89</sup> The City of Subotica has, since the beginning of the migrant crisis, sought to include migrant children in various activities, and attending classes at school<sup>90</sup> is a step forward in bringing the children of migrants and their families closer to the citizens of Subotica.<sup>91</sup> The Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) invested in renovation of the health centre in Subotica, while the Initiative for Development and Cooperation (IDC) purchased an ambulance. UNDP financed the reconstruction of the Centre for Social Work.

Higher demands for provision of humanitarian assistance to migrants have led to an increase in local employment. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, the Centre for Social Work in Subotica, and many international and non-governmental organisations employed a number of members of the local community to provide assistance to migrants in 2015 and 2016.

In the first wave of mass influx in 2015 and 2016, Syrians, Pakistanis, Iraqi and Iranians were the most present and it was noticeable that they were mainly families, with higher education and a better financial situation. Syrians, especially, stayed in hotels, apartments and villas and spent considerable funds while they were transiting through Subotica. The income of taxi drivers greatly increased, while the turnover in shops enlarged noticeably as well, and there are numerous speculations about large profits made by local smugglers. Later, Afghans were the largest group and it was evident that they had little or no education and were less well-off financially.

When it comes to the financial impact on the City of Subotica, there is no significant public expenditure, due to many donations during the crisis. There were no public revenues caused by the migrant crisis. Apart from hiring of the local population, there were no cases of migrants being hired<sup>92</sup>, except a number of asylum-seekers working as translators in NGOs and international organisations. This is to be expected given the small number of approved applications for refugee or international protection status.<sup>93</sup> Concerning social tensions, there

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<sup>89</sup> Evaluation of the USAID project Support to Local Response to Refugee Crisis, through two interventions: Enhancing local resilience to the migration crisis, implemented by UNDP Serbia and Bolstering Emergency Municipal and Local Community Response to the Movement of Refugees throughout Serbia, implemented by the Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation (AVDF).

<sup>90</sup> In September 2013, the inclusion of refugee children in the education system in Serbia began. In the 2017-2018 school year, classes were realised in 45 schools in the Republic of Serbia for a total of 503 pupils and for an additional 83 students in collective centres. Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia (2017) Education for migrant students in the Republic of Serbia. <https://bit.ly/2MuyRW5>

<sup>91</sup> Subotica.com portal, News "Migrants children in schools". <http://bit.ly/2GgcSzt>.

<sup>92</sup> Apart from issuance of personal work permits, the language barrier is a major obstacle to entering the labour market in Serbia. Most refugees do not speak Serbian which is a must if they want to work.

<sup>93</sup> After 9 months from the moment of submission of the asylum application, asylum seeker has right to work in Serbia. Since they are mainly transiting, small number of them stay to the end of the procedure. The number of approved applications is very small. Refugees and persons with international protection have right to work.

have not been any major incidents, yet there were thefts, break-ins, and demolitions of holiday houses, especially near the border. There were no political tensions in Subotica.

The media had a great influence on the local populace, especially in Hungary, and was widely present in Subotica and Kanjiža. Much of the reporting on the migrant crisis was negative and influenced local opinion accordingly. Yet, according to the interviews that non-governmental organisation Group 484 conducted with local people in Subotica,<sup>94</sup> the influx of migrants was not perceived as an event with significant effects on the lives of citizens, since they are staying only temporarily. The citizens do not hide that this issue is not among their priorities. Yet, some of them emphasise negative consequences of these events, since there were thefts and destruction of abandoned houses. On the other hand, it is believed that Serbia has offered hospitality to migrants and that it treats them better than many other countries. Conversely, it is thought that without significant financial and material assistance from developed countries, Serbia would not be able to meet the requirements imposed by the migrant crisis.

In general, asylum seekers in TC Subotica stated in the interviews that they feel safe and provided for in the country.<sup>95</sup> They trust the Serbian police and consider local people to be hospitable and benevolent. Even though they are only transiting through Serbia, migrants are open to getting better acquainted with local culture and establishing contact with the local population; they have a need for socialisation.

In the interviews with entrepreneurs from Subotica,<sup>96</sup> it was stated that, in principle, they support the idea of employing migrants during their stay in Serbia, yet they do not see a potential within their companies for hiring migrants, or such opportunities are rather scarce and refer only to simple jobs. Entrepreneurs think that there should be a register of migrants' qualifications which can be compared against market demands. In addition, the impression of respondents is that integration of migrants into the local economy has not yet started.

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<sup>94</sup> More about the interviews with local population is available in the report Migration challenges, local policies and civic participation, Group 484, page 93-101.

<sup>95</sup> More about the interviews with asylum seekers is available in the report Migration challenges, local policies and civic participation, Group 484, page 102-104.

<sup>96</sup> More about the interviews with entrepreneurs is available in the report Migration challenges, local policies and civic participation, Group 484, page 105-107.

**Impressions of the local population in Subotica**

*"What caused fear in me was that, you know, I live near the forest, and that's where they were hiding most, there are many vineyards in this part of the town, various fields, orchards... They were wandering there, hiding, and waiting to see whether anyone lives a house, and even if someone did live in a house, if they were out for a few days, they would break into their houses and make some damage, took everything they found".*

*"I say, that, simply, a man does not leave home just like that, gladly. And doesn't leave his hearth. Trust me. It's very hard. I never got over it. [...] And I live in my own country. D' you know how people feel then? We should help them."*

**Impressions of the migrants in Subotica**

*"[...] for the past two years we have not established any particular communication, but sometimes there were situations when local population would approach us – they want to talk to us."*

*"Serbia is a very nice country, people are very nice, cultural, I simply haven't had any problems in Serbia, I would like to speak to people, but there is the language barrier. We don't understand each other."*

*"And we just trust to the police... yes, because when we arrived in every country, they take you... the police arrive and every time they take you, maybe to jail, maybe to a camp, or to a house... they help us... Just in Bulgaria they were not good because they send us to jail, and said you have to go. When we arrived in Serbia, the police catch us and gave us police paper. And they said, you are going to a camp, and we will help you, because in the camps, you are safe."*

**Impression of the entrepreneurs in Subotica**

*"In my opinion, it wouldn't be a problem at all if they wanted to stay, well... there are many of them in Germany, and if there are many of us there, and many Turks there, what's wrong with having them here as well..."*

*"They should be given a chance, whoever wishes... They know that it is difficult to go abroad, that they need to stay here for a year, two, five years, because it's hard to leave particularly since the borders were closed, and with the wires, dogs, and all sorts of things... Give it up... [...] 'Let's see who wants what, ask people, let's see what their professions are, I guess this data could be obtained from some of the countries, whichever... [...] The fact that we are always like, we, we and we... well you see, that's a different story..."*

Source: Migration challenges, local policies and civic participation, Group 484, 2018

### 3 Conclusions and lessons learnt

Before the migrant crisis in Europe, the issue of migration in the Republic of Serbia was mainly related to refugees and internally displaced persons from ex-Yugoslav countries and Kosovo\* in the 1990s. At the policy level, the state had to improve the existing legal framework and develop new strategic documents. Existing migration policies did not include measures to improve the situation of asylum seekers and people with granted asylum protection. The European migrant crisis has opened up space for the improvement of the policy framework both at national and local level, and new laws, strategies and action plans that cover this target group have been adopted. In Subotica, the Local Action Plan (LAP) for improving the status of refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees under the readmission agreements for 2017-2021 has been adopted, defining the goals for a better position of asylum seekers and refugees in society. The crisis has also led to the improvement of cooperation between central and local government in the field of migration, and to defining the problems in communication and coordination of different services.

Since the 1990s, Serbia has been developing institutional infrastructure in the field of migration. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration was established, becoming the central institution at national level, and the relevant ministries have also been involved in resolving this issue. As Serbia found itself on the Balkan route in the new migrant crisis, the work of these institutions was in focus again, and more attention was paid to their capacity building. Local self-governments affected by the large influx of migrants have faced numerous challenges, including social, security, and economic challenges. The European Union, followed by many other donors, international and non-governmental organisations, has invested significant resources to enhance the capacity of all stakeholders to effectively respond to the crisis and provide adequate assistance to migrants. As the main transit centre on the way to Hungary, Subotica has made efforts to coordinate public institutions and different organisations, and to raise their capacity to respond to the crisis. In addition to the Migration Council, which, according to the law, must be established by each local self-government, a working group on migration monitoring has been formed, bringing together representatives of all key stakeholders at the city level.

In addition to efforts to improve the legal and institutional level, there have been significant investments in local infrastructure in Subotica as well. The centre for asylum seekers was built, many existing facilities have been renovated, and new equipment has been purchased which will be used in the future to provide services to the local population.

At the social level, a number of activities were organised in the city aimed at connecting the local population and migrants. International, non-governmental and voluntary organisations organised sports competitions, cultural events, and training for cultural mediators, among other activities. These have contributed to the reduction of xenophobia and discrimination against migrants.

As for the lessons learned, the role of the state is crucial in the coordination and use of available resources. Yet, as shown in the refugee crisis, teamwork is necessary and brings the best results, through cooperation, networking and joint contribution of state institutions, UN agencies, international and non-governmental organisations, donors and citizens. At policy level, it is important to emphasise the significance of adopting and implementing the national Response Plan, as well as the Local Action Plans at the level of local self-governments.

The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration has improved communication and coordination at the local level. At the moment of a large influx of migrants, in cooperation with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, the City of Subotica managed to coordinate representatives of local bodies, public institutions, international and non-governmental organisations, and to provide adequate assistance to asylum seekers and refugees.

When it comes to the response of local population, many of them show willingness to help. Yet, there is still a need for better informing and communication between organisations working in the field, media and citizens.



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## List of interviewees

<b>Type of organisation</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Public authority	Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia
Local authority	City of Subotica
Non-profit organisation	Caritas Subotica
NGO	Asylum Protection Centre (APC)
NGO	NGO Atina
NGO	Group 484
International organisation	Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT)
International organisation	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
NGO	Hungarian Helsinki Committee
Community organisation	MigSzol Szeged
University	University of Szeged
International organisation	European Commission, DG REGIO
Religious organisation	Hungarian Roman Catholic Church

## List of Annexes

### Annex I Impacts

No substantial data on impact in Hungary were found. The tables below present information found related to Serbia.

Table 3: Financial impacts and their indicators - regional/local level in Serbia

Impacts	Selected indicators	Last available data*	Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**	Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*	Source	Regional / local***
Public revenues	Average social security contributions and taxes (payroll/business) per employed refugee <sup>97,98</sup>	The general opinion of the interviewees is that there is no or very limited impact on public revenues.			Local authorities, NGOs	Regional/National
Public revenues	Consumption tax on spending of refugees per refugee <sup>99</sup>	The general opinion of the interviewees is that there is no, or very limited, impact on public revenues.			Local authorities, universities, NGOs, or portion of national studies	National
Public spending	Spending on integration and initial reception measures <sup>100</sup> per refugee	At the moment, there is limited data on public spending in Serbia, particularly at the local level. In regard to the impact on public spending of integration and initial reception measures, the general opinion is that there is a medium decrease nationally, due to the investments in public infrastructure (waste management, water supply) and reception measures			Local authorities, NGOs	National

<sup>97</sup> Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

<sup>98</sup> Calculated by average values for the active population with a discount for immigrants from literature.

<sup>99</sup> Here it is mainly asked whether data exist and if interviewees have views on the matter. Please leave the space blank if there is no evidence available.

<sup>100</sup> Housing, sustenance, language course, employment integration courses other integration courses

		(health care, housing, basic education, social protection). Yet, since 2016, the Republic of Serbia has received M funding (European Union) which covers: operating expenses, nutrition, provision of health services and access to education for refugee children and improvement of the conditions for accommodation of people in need for international protection at reception centres.				
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*Table 4: Economic impacts and their indicators in Serbia*

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Selected indicators</b>	<b>Last available data*</b>	<b>Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**</b>	<b>Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Regional / local***</b>
Employment (rate)	Number and proportion (%) of refugees finding a job (at arrival)	There are no available data on the number of employed asylum seekers or refugees, either on national, regional or local level.			Case studies Past studies	Regional

*Table 5: Social and political impacts and their indicators in Serbia*

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Selected indicators</b>	<b>Last available data*</b>	<b>Forecast of growth or decrease in ten years**</b>	<b>Forecast of growth or decrease in twenty years*</b>	<b>Data sources</b>	<b>Regional / local***</b>
Demography	Impact on dependency ratio	There is no impact on demography, since Serbia is preserved as a transit			Local Authorities, NGOs	National

		country and there are a small number of people with granted asylum and subsidiary protection.				
Security	Impact on crime rate (of refugee/total population)	Very small impact on security, only 2-3 major incidents were reported during the whole crisis in Subotica.			Local Authorities, NGOs	Regional
Political tensions caused by migration	Relevance of immigration in political debates and elections	The position of the leading local coalition is unified, so there were no political tensions. General opinion is that refugees will only pass through Serbia.			Earlier interview with the local NGO ALD Subotica	National



## Annex II Policy and actors' classification

Table 6: Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at country level – Hungary

Levels	Bureaucrats*	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	European Commission EASO (European Asylum Support Office) FRONTEX The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) UNHCR IOM	European Parliament	Eurostat AIDA Asylum Information Database	European Council on Refugees and Exiles	Caritas Internationalis Médecins Sans Frontières Red Cross
National	Hungarian Government Ministry of the Interior Ministry of National Economy Ministry of Human Resources Ministry of Foreign Affairs Immigration and Asylum Office Police Hungarian Justice System	Hungarian Parliament	Statistical Office of Hungary National Employment Service	UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe IOM Hungarian Helsinki Committee	MigSzol Council of Charities Caritas Hungarica Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta Hungarian Interchurch Aid Hungarian Red Cross Hungarian Reformed Church Aid Hungarian Baptist Aid
Regional	Regional Border Police Centres Regional Offices of Immigration and Asylum Office Regional Governments	Hungarian Parliament	Regional offices of the Statistical Office of Hungary Universities Regional offices of National Employment Service	UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe IOM Hungarian Helsinki Committee	MigSzol Council of Charities Caritas Hungarica Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta Hungarian Interchurch Aid Hungarian Red Cross Hungarian Reformed Church Aid Hungarian Baptist Aid
Local	Local self-governments	Hungarian Parliament Mayors Local politicians	Regional offices of the Statistical Office of Hungary Universities Regional offices of National Employment Service	UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe IOM Hungarian Helsinki Committee	MigSzol Council of Charities Caritas Hungarica Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta Hungarian Interchurch Aid Hungarian Red Cross Hungarian Reformed Church Aid Hungarian Baptist Aid

Table 7: Policy classification: different types of policies for different targets at country and local level - Serbia

Category	Types	Country-level policies targeting:		Regional or local-level policies targeting:		Assessment*
		Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	Asylum seekers	Refugee status holders	
Initial reception, emergency measures, and referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency housing</li> <li>• Emergency health care</li> <li>• Basic subsistence needs</li> <li>• Reception and recognition provisions</li> <li>• Residence permits</li> <li>• Family reunification</li> <li>• Settlement restrictions</li> <li>• Referrals</li> </ul> <p>Distinguishing between exceptional and ordinary reception procedures</p>	<p>The Response Plan in case of mass influx of migrants in the Republic of Serbia 2015 (September 2015)</p> <p>The “Response Plan” adopted by the Serbia Government for the winter period October 2016 – March 2017</p> <p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Migration Management</p> <p>Law on Healthcare</p> <p>Rulebook on mandatory medical examinations of certain categories of employed persons in sanitary facilities and on mandatory and recommended medical examinations subject to certain categories of population (Official Gazette RS 3/17)</p>	<p>The Response Plan in case of mass influx of migrants in the Republic of Serbia 2015 (September 2015)</p> <p>The “Response Plan” adopted by the Serbia Government for the winter period October 2016 – March 2017</p> <p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Healthcare</p> <p>Law on Foreigners (family reunification)</p>			3
Housing / accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing/accommodation</li> <li>• Housing support</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>	Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection	Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection	Local action plans to address the issue	Local action plans to address the issue	3

			A Decree on Criteria for Establishing Priority Accommodation of Persons Recognised the Right to Refuge or Granted Subsidiary Protection and the Conditions for the Use of Temporary Housing  Law on Migration Management	of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and returnees under the re-admission agreement	of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and returnees under the re-admission agreement	
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency/urgent healthcare</li> <li>• Full health care</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>	<p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Healthcare</p> <p>Rulebook on mandatory medical examinations of certain categories of employed persons in sanitary facilities and on mandatory and recommended medical examinations subject to certain categories of population (Official Gazette RS 3/17)</p>	<p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Healthcare</p> <p>Decree on the Integration of Foreigners Granted Asylum in the Social, Cultural and Economic Life of the Republic of Serbia</p>	Local action plans to address the issue of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees under the readmission agreement	Local action plans to address the issue of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees under the readmission agreement	4
Social assistance and income support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social assistance services</li> <li>• Income support, eligibility for welfare benefits</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>	<p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Social Protection</p> <p>The Rulebook on Social Assistance to Asylum Seekers and Persons Granted Asylum (2008)</p>	<p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Social Protection</p> <p>The Rulebook on Social Assistance to Asylum Seekers and Persons Granted</p>			2

			Asylum (2008) Decree on the Integration of Foreigners Granted Asylum in the Social, Cultural and Economic Life of the Republic of Serbia			
Education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School enrolment and attendance</li> <li>• Adult education</li> <li>• Vocational education and training</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>	<p>Law on the Education System Foundations</p> <p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>School Support Plan for the inclusion of refugee/ asylum seeking pupils</p>	<p>Law on the Education System Foundations</p> <p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Decree on the Integration of Foreigners Granted Asylum in the Social, Cultural and Economic Life of the Republic of Serbia (learning Serbian language)</p> <p>School Support Plan for the inclusion of refugee/ asylum seeking pupils</p>			3
Labour market access/ integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills assessment/validation</li> <li>• Active labour market policy (counselling, mentoring, job search assistance, entrepreneurship promotion, and social networks)</li> <li>• Grants and preparatory courses</li> <li>• Employment subsidies, apprenticeships,</li> </ul>	<p>Law on the Employment of Foreigners</p> <p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p>	<p>Law on the Employment of Foreigners</p> <p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Foreigners</p> <p>Decree on the Integration of Foreigners</p>			2

	<p>traineeships, on-the-job trainings, temporary/voluntary work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unemployment benefits</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>		<p>Granted Asylum in the Social, Cultural and Economic Life of the Republic of Serbia</p> <p>Rulebook on Issuance of Work Permits to Aliens and Stateless Persons (Official Gazette RS, 94/2015 and 9/2018)</p>			
Social and political integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early orientation programmes (language, practical orientation, civic education etc.)</li> <li>• Integration programmes such as sport, culture, diversity promotion</li> <li>• Political participation (local level)</li> <li>• Residence and religion rights</li> <li>• ...</li> </ul>		<p>Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p> <p>Law on Migration Management</p> <p>Decree on the Integration of Foreigners Granted Asylum in the Social, Cultural and Economic Life of the Republic of Serbia (Individual integration plans for foreigners granted asylum)</p>	Local action plans to address the issue of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and returnees under the re-admission agreement	Local action plans to address the issue of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees under the re-admission agreement	2
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human trafficking</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Humans, Especially Women and Children, and Protection of the Victims 2017 – 2022</p> <p>Action Plan for Chapter 24 of the EU Accession Talks</p>	<p>Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Humans, Especially Women and Children, and Protection of the Victims 2017 – 2022</p>			3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harmonisation with the EU acquis</li> <li>Integrated Border Management</li> <li>Illegal migration</li> </ul>	<p>Strategy for the Integrated Border Management in the Republic of Serbia 2017-2020</p> <p>Strategy for combating illegal migration in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2020</p>	<p>Action Plan for Chapter 24 of the EU Accession Talks</p> <p>Strategy for the Integrated Border Management in the Republic of Serbia 2017-2020</p> <p>Strategy for combating illegal migration in the Republic of Serbia 2018-2020</p>			
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Table 8: Actors classification: A picture of the actors involved in the asylum seekers and refugees' system at country level - Serbia

Levels	Bureaucrats*	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	<p>European Commission: The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia DG ECHO (Directorate -General of the European Commission for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operation DG HOME - Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs</p>		<p>Eurostat AIDA Asylum Information Database</p>	<p>Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI) European Trade Union Committee for Education</p>	<p>Caritas Internationalis Danish Refugee Council East European Missions Network International Rescue Committee IRC Médecins du Monde Médecins Sans Frontières Norwegian Refugee Council GIZ People in Need Jesuit Refugee Service Oxfam Save the Children The SOS Children's Villages Terre des Hommes TDH</p>

	<p>EASO (European Asylum Support Office) FRONTEX The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) UNHCR UNICEF UNDP UN WOMEN UNFPA UNOPS USAID IOM Swiss Cooperation Office (SDC) ICRC - International Committee of the Red Cross</p>				<p>WHO (World Health Organisation) KAS (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung) Initiative for Development and Cooperation IDC Catholic Relief Services – CRS CARE International International Aid Network IAN</p>
National	<p>Ministry of Interior, (Department for Foreigners, The Asylum Office, Department of Borders)</p> <p>Asylum Commission</p> <p>Administrative Court</p> <p>Commissariat for Refugees and Migration</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Public Administration</p> <p>Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy</p> <p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Ministry of Justice</p>	The Serbian Parliament	<p>Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia</p> <p>National Employment Service</p> <p>The Institute of Social Sciences</p> <p>Strategic Research Institute</p>	<p>Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Serbia</p> <p>Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities</p>	<p>Red Cross Serbia Foundation Ana and Vlade Divac Refugee Aid Serbia Info Park Hub Belgrade Centre for Human Rights NGO Atina Asylum Protection Centre (APC-CZA) Group 484 Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre Praxis Helsinki Committee for Human Rights Belgrade Centre for Security Policy Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation</p>

	<p>Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows</p> <p>Centre for Human Trafficking Victims Protection (CHTVP)</p> <p>The Government Office for Human and Minority Rights</p> <p>The Government Office for Cooperation with Civil Society</p>				
Regional	<p>Regional Border Police Centres</p> <p>The Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina</p> <p>Provincial Migration Council (Vojvodina)</p>	Politicians			NGOs involved in humanitarian aid/reception/integration
Local	<p>Local self-governments</p> <p>Centre for Social Work</p> <p>Hospitals and Health Centres</p> <p>Police Administrations</p> <p>Education institutions (primary and secondary schools)</p> <p>Local Youth Offices</p>	<p>Mayors</p> <p>Commissioners for Refugees and Migrations</p> <p>Members of Migration Councils</p>			<p>Local Red Cross Offices</p> <p>Local NGOs involved in providing humanitarian and other assistance</p>



## Annex III Network analysis

### Hungary

Table 9: Actors classification: The actors involved in the specific intervention under analysis

Levels	Bureaucrats*	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International					
National	Hungarian Government Ministry of the Interior Immigration and Asylum Office Police			UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe Hungarian Helsinki Committee	Council of Charities (Caritas Hungarica Hungarian Charity Service of the Order of Malta Hungarian Interchurch Aid Hungarian Red Cross Hungarian Reformed Church Aid Hungarian Baptist Aid)
Regional	Dél-Alföld Regional Office of Immigration and Asylum Office				
Local	City of Szeged				MigSzol Szeged

Table 10: Mapping the actors and the roles – 2015 wave

Actor no.	Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
		Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
1	Hungarian Government	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	0
2	Ministry of the Interior	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	0
3	Dél-Alföld Regional Office of Immigration and Asylum Office	0	0	1	0	2	2	1	1	0
4	Police	0	0	1	0	2	2	2	2	2
5	City of Szeged	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	0	2
6	UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	2
7	Hungarian Helsinki Committee	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1
8	Council of Charities	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1
9	MigSzol Szeged	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1

Table 11: Mapping the actors and the roles – transit zone

Actor no.	Actors (please specify the name of the actor as in the previous table)	Role in the network								
		Setting the legal framework	Political responsible	Technical responsible	Financing	Programming the intervention	Coordinator in the implementation phase	Policy implementer	Monitoring and data collection	Actors mobilizing relevant resources (legal, political, knowledge, human resources)
1	Hungarian Government	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	0
2	Ministry of the Interior	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	0
3	Dél-Alföld Regional Office of Immigration and Asylum Office	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2
4	Police	0	0	2	0	2	2	2	2	2
5	City of Szeged	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	UNHCR Regional Representation for Central Europe	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2
7	Hungarian Helsinki Committee	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2
8	Council of Charities	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	1
9	MigSzol Szeged	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

Table 12: Relationship matrix – 2015 wave

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1									
2	X								
3	X	X							
4	X	X	X						
5			X	X					
6			X	X					
7			X	X		X			
8			X	X		X			
9			X	X	X	X			

Table 13: Relationship matrix – Transit zone

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1									
2	X								
3	X	X							
4	X	X	X						
5									
6			X	X					
7									
8			X	X		X			
9									

**Serbia**

Table 14: Actors classification: The actors involved in the specific intervention under analysis

Levels	Bureaucrats* <sup>101</sup>	Politicians*	Experts*	Special interest*	Diffused interest*
International	The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia (Madad Fund) UNHCR UNICEF UNDP UNFPA UNOPS				Caritas Subotica Danish Refugee Council Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund East European Missions Network International Rescue Committee IRC Médecins du Monde




<sup>101</sup> \* Bureaucratic actors are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the claim that formal rules and procedures confer them a specific responsibility in the process; Political actors are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention on the fact of representing citizens as they enjoy citizens’ consensus; experts are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the claim of having the knowledge needed in order to solve the problem; special interest actors (grey nodes) are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention on the fact that they are directly affected by the policy decision, meaning that they will try to maximise the benefit/cost ratio from their specific point of view; general interest actors (pink nodes) are those actors that base the legitimacy of their intervention in the policy process on the fact that the interests they represent are general (e.g. NGOs, etc.) and on the fact that they represent groups that cannot defend their interests by themselves.




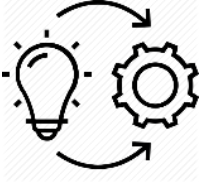
	USAID IOM Swiss Cooperation Office (SDC)				Médecins Sans Frontières Save the Children The SOS Children's Villages Terre des Hommes TDH KAS (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung) Initiative for Development and Cooperation IDC CARE International
National	Ministry of Interior, (Department for Foreigners, The Asylum Office, Department of Borders)  Asylum Commission  Administrative Court  Commissariat for Refugees and Migration  Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Policy  Ministry of Health  Ministry of Education  Working Group on Mixed Migration Flows	The Serbian Parliament	Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia  National Employment Service		Red Cross Serbia Foundation Ana and Vlade Divac Belgrade Centre for Human Rights NGO Atina Asylum Protection Centre (APC- CZA) Group 484 Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation
Regional	Regional Border Police Centres  The Government of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina  Provincial Migration Council (Vojvodina)	Politicians			NGOs involved in humanitarian aid/ reception/integrati on



Local	Local self-governments  Centres for Social Work  Hospitals and Health Centres  Police Administrations  Education institutions (primary and secondary schools)  Local Youth Offices	Mayor  Commissioner for refugees and migration of the City of Subotica  Members of the City Migration Council and Working group for monitoring migration in Subotica  Coordinator for migration issues in Kanjiža Municipality		Local Network for integration support (City Council, Centre for Social Work, Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance, "Kolevka", NGO Cosmo, Primary Schools, UNHCR, National Employment Service – Subotica Office, NGO Atina, Subotica health centre)	Red Cross Subotica  Red Cross Kanjiža  LDA Subotica  Local initiative for Refugees  COSMO
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The following infographic summarizes 19 actors and their roles in the emergency intervention in Subotica. The larger font sizes represent central actors while the smaller ones have a secondary role in that role/function.

Table 15: Mapping the actors and the roles

Roles	Actors
Setting Legal Framework 	City of Subotica
Political Responsible 	Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Working Group for Monitoring migration in Subotica, Subotica Migration Council within local self-government
Technical Responsible 	Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Working Group for Monitoring migration in Subotica, Subotica Migration Council within local self-government

<p>Financing</p> 	<p>UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, IOM, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Caritas Subotica, Red Cross Subotica, Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation, HCIT, APC, NGO Atina, Group 484</p>
<p>Programming the Intervention</p> 	<p>UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, IOM, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Working Group for Monitoring migration in Subotica, Subotica Migration Council within local self-government</p>
<p>Coordinator in the implement.</p> 	<p>UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, IOM, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Centre for Social Work Subotica, Centre for Social Work Kanjiža, Health Centre Subotica, Working Group for Monitoring migration in Subotica, Subotica Migration Council within local self-government, Police Administration Subotica</p>
<p>Policy implementer</p> 	<p>UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, IOM, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Centre for Social Work Subotica, Centre for Social Work Kanjiža, Police Administration Subotica, Health Centre Subotica, Caritas Subotica, Red Cross Subotica, Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation, HCIT, APC, NGO Atina, Group 484</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Monitoring and data</p> 	<p>UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, IOM, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Centre for Social Work Subotica, Centre for Social Work Kanjiža, Police Administration Subotica, Health Centre Subotica, Caritas Subotica, Red Cross Subotica, Ana and Vlade Divac Foundation, HCIT, APC, NGO Atina, Group 484, Working Group for Monitoring migration in Subotica, Subotica Migration Council within local self-government</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Resources mobilisation</p> 	<p>UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, IOM, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, City of Subotica, Working Group for Monitoring migration in Subotica, Subotica Migration Council within local self-government</p>