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The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) is a multilateral development bank with an exclusively social mandate.

Through the provision of financing and technical expertise for projects with a high social impact in its member states, it actively promotes social cohesion and strengthens social integration in Europe.

In 2015 the CEB set up the **Migrant and Refugee Fund (MRF)** to help its member states deal with migrant and refugee flows.

The Fund supports CEB member states' efforts to ensure that migrants and refugees who arrive on their territory enjoy basic human rights, such as shelter, food and medical aid, as well as personal security.



International Organization for Migration

IOM Migrants and Refugees in Croatia

Project is implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in coordination with the Ministry of the Interior



Introduction

From the beginning of the migration crisis in Croatia on 16 September 2015, more than 650,000 migrants and refugees entered and transited its territory. Rapid migration flows and fast transit represented a challenge for both government's and humanitarian agencies' efforts to provide adequate assistance to the affected population.

Since early March 2016 the migrant influx landscape changed in a few days and the entire movement came to a halt in the wake of a political decision to close the so-called Balkans Route. As a result, a total of 145 stranded migrants occupied the Winter Reception and Transit Centre (WRTC) in Slavonski Brod on 1 April 2016.

The new environment revealed a number of vulnerabilities amongst the stranded migrants and necessitated a greater level of sensitivity and engagement than before.

Project purpose

The purpose of the project worth EUR 765,000 was to provide necessary assistance and protection to migrants and refugees arriving to and transiting through Croatia. This resulted in scaling up of life-saving interventions for migrant populations in Croatia while mitigating the negative impacts of the movement.

This project contributed to a better understanding of migrants' needs. Efforts were made to provide protection for vulnerable groups such as women with children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, adapting to the changing circumstances on the ground.

Duration

The project lasted nine months (December 2015-August 2016).

Project objectives

The objectives of the project were threefold:

- Provide adequate and timely **distribution of Non-Food Items (NFIs) and Emergency Shelter (ES)** to the affected populations.
- Establish and operate the **Mobility Tracking Matrix** as a flow monitoring tool to provide up-to-date information and statistics related to locations, movement, numbers and basic demographics of migrants and refugees while transiting through Croatia.
- Set up **information desk activities** at migrant and refugee reception and transit points aiming to provide key messages and updates in relevant languages related to the rights, services and infrastructures available.
- Organize **migrant community work** with the aim to alleviate the pressures caused by longer stay and uncertain destiny of stranded migrants.



Photo: IOM staff conducting flow monitoring survey

Results

The project provided timely and adequate NFI/ES assistance to all migrants and refugees entering and transiting Croatian territory, with particular focus on vulnerable groups.



Photo: IOM provided heated containers

Updated data gathered from the Mobility Tracking Matrix tool were used to enhance the predictability of migrant flows, identify the needs and support coordinated emergency response by the government and other stakeholders. A total of 3,501 surveys were successfully completed in the course of the project.

Multilingual information desk activities raised the awareness of migrants on the rights, services and infrastructure available at the transit centre. Project-funded interpreters facilitated the reception, communication and service provision processes, enabling the migrants to exercise their rights and provide feedback.

Finally, migrant community work contributed to build the capacities of the migrants and channel their feedback through the organization of language classes, hygiene classes, cultural orientation, provision of referral services, leisure time activities and 24/7 interpretation services.