

Report from the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists of Serbia (Serbia South) on their involvement in migration crisis

Dragisa Armus

The Union of Christian Baptist Churches in Serbia spent several days in September visiting refugee camps along the border with Macedonia. The refugees were from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

On 21 September, a team visited the refugee camp in Preshevo, near the Macedonian border. They spent a great deal of time with the refugees, speaking with them, taking pictures, and hearing their stories. "In our country, everybody shoots everybody," said one refugee. "We want to save our lives and the lives of our children."

Like other times, organisation at the camp is good, the team reported. Refugees are registered, and they receive an ID and a medical check-up. They also receive food, water, and hygiene supplies. The union has been able to enter the camps in cooperation with the local government and the Red Cross.

The next day, the team went to the actual border with Macedonia. Thousands of refugees were streaming across the border. The feeling of relief was obvious once they stepped into Serbia, even though they do not know their destination or what their accommodation will be. The team mostly saw youth from the ages of 15 to 19.

More than 4000 refugees entered Serbia on 22 September with 30% of those being women and children.

The situation in the south of Serbia is continuous, Union leaders said. Every day thousands of refugees are entering from Macedonia, heading first to Miratovac and Preshevo. There is a great need for food, baby food, hygienic items, waterproof jackets, and shoes. The union has been able to help with bread, food, and waterproof jackets.

