

UNICEF Says 106,000 Children Applied for Asylum in Europe



Brussels, September 21 (RHC)-- According to UNICEF since the beginning of the year, some 106,000 children have applied for asylum in Europe. Children under the age of ten usually arrive with family members, but the number of minors arriving at EU borders unaccompanied has spiked since the beginning of the year.

UNICEF says that some of them have been separated from their guardians on the grueling journey, others have been orphaned by conflicts in their home countries while many have been sent by their families with hopes of making new lives and later sending money back or even help in legally bringing the rest of the family to Europe.

The continent is currently facing a huge refugee crisis with thousands of asylum seekers attempting entry through its borders. According to the European Unions border agency, well over 500,000 refugees have reached the EU borders.

Over the weekend, tens of thousands of asylum seekers reached Austria. They were initially sent to Hungary by Croatia, which said it was already overwhelmed by the 20,000 that had arrived last Wednesday.

According to Austrian police, around 9,000 people had passed through border from Hungary; about 5,000 at Heiligenkreuz, near the city of Graz, and 4,000 at Nickelsdorf near Vienna. Some 10,000 more were expected to pass through before the day's end, police said.

According to regulations, the children are permitted to leave the centers during the day and only have to check in at night. During their time out of the centers, they frequently fall prey to people who exploit them and even organized crime syndicates, says Fabio Sorgoni who works for the Italian charity On The Road.

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