

**Slovenian Red Cross**

**Case Study:**

**Ljubljana Humanitarian  
Service Point (HSP)**



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## Case Study:

# Ljubljana Humanitarian Service Point (HSP)



### Location

Ljubljana, Slovenia

### Date established

2022

### Target communities

Migrants and displaced persons

### Services provided

- Information
- Non-food items (such as hygiene items, footwear, clothing)
- First Aid
- First Aid workshops for self - protection
- MHPSS activities (individual psychosocial support and psychological first aid, different community based activities such as celebration of holidays, art workshops, gatherings, sports activities)
- Restoring family links (such as tracing of missing family members, securing connectivity - SIM cards, phone charging, internet, organizational/ financial support in cases of family members' passing)
- Free legal aid in collaboration with external service provider (NGO)
- Safe referrals (to other organizations/institutions or other SRC services such as assistance in family reunification, one-time financial support for different living costs)
- Integration (such as practices of Slovene language, accompanying support of volunteers/interpreters/cultural mediators to different institutions, translation of documents, assistance with finding employment, socio-cultural orientation)
- Repair activities (mainly bikes and clothing)

## Context

Slovenia is predominantly a transit country used by migrants who have entered Slovenia via (mostly) the border with Croatia after transiting through the Western Balkan route.

According to data from the IOM, there were 60,587 migrant arrivals in 2023, a 93% increase on the 31,161 arrivals in 2022. The number of arrivals from Jan-June 2024 are at a similar level to those in the first 6-months of 2023. It should be noted that Croatia joined the Schengen area in January 2023, abolishing the need for border checks between Croatia and Slovenia, and this may be a contributing factor to the increase in arrivals. However, in October 2023, Slovenia temporarily reintroduced border controls at the internal borders with Croatia and Hungary.

The majority of migrants arriving in Slovenia do not stay in Slovenia, as they seek to continue their journey beyond Slovenia to reach their intended destination country elsewhere in the European Union. There were 7,260 asylum applications in 2023, a 7% increase on the 6,785 applications made in 2022.

Migrants and displaced persons who reach Slovenia after transiting the Western Balkan routes will have faced many dangers along the route and are often in need of urgent humanitarian assistance upon their arrival in Ljubljana. The National Society responded to this need by establishing a dedicated Humanitarian Service Point (HSP) in the centre of Ljubljana.

The Slovenian Red Cross also provides support to migrants at reception centres in Slovenia, at government run asylum accommodation (known as Asylum Homes) and through its network of 56 local branches (when needs arise).

## **Overview of the Humanitarian Service Point (HSP) in Ljubljana**

The Humanitarian Service Point in Ljubljana was established in 2022 as part of the [Global Route Based Migration Programme \(GRBMP\)](#). It is located directly opposite the main train and bus station, making it easily accessible to migrants arriving in Ljubljana. It is easily identifiable due to the Red Cross branding on the door of the building. The HSP is open 5 days a week. Official hours are Monday (11:00 – 18.00), Tuesday (10.00 – 15.00) and Thursday (10.00 – 15.00). On Wednesday and Fridays the HSP operates on an appointment only basis during the hours of 8.00 and 16.00.

The HSP employs 3 persons, including a full-time cultural mediator. Activities are supported by more than 60 volunteers and more than 30 external collaborators (interpreters/translators, legal aid advisors, workshops facilitators, MHPSS experts) and other SRC staff with different expertise.

Upon entry, the HSP provides a warm and welcoming safe space for migrants over three floors, comprising of a reception area on the ground floor, a separate floor above for casework, and/or private interviews/casework, and a basement area providing access to desktop PCs, clothing and hygiene supplies combined with an area to relax, charge mobile phones and space take part in a range of information sessions/classes.

Migrants are welcomed by Red Cross staff and volunteers in the reception area, where they are informed of the services available within the HSP whilst having their needs assessed. The HSP team then work to address any identified needs through the provision of information, individual casework, the provision of non-food items including hygiene items, clothing and shoes as well as access to group sessions, desktop computers.

The HSP has also started to support migrants with repairs to clothing, bicycles and other essential items as a result of collaboration and exchanges of learning with the French Red Cross who operate a dedicated 'Humanitarian Repair Lab' to migrants in France.

Migrants generally become aware of the HSP through 'word of mouth', along with leaflets distributed in Asylum Homes and Reception centres and exchanges through informal WhatsApp groups and other social media platforms.

The staff and volunteer team undertake regular walking patrols around the bus and train station area to identify migrants who may be in need of assistance to inform them about the HSP and direct them to the building.

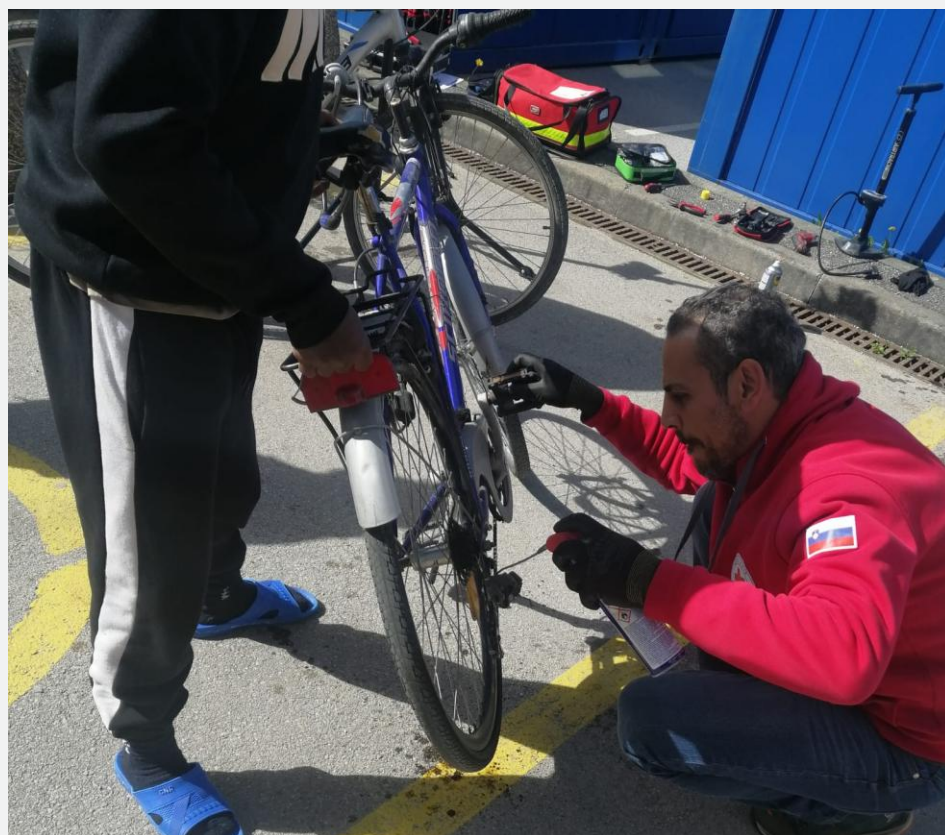


*Cultural Mediator giving advice at Ljubljana HSP*





*Clothing storage area in the basement of the HSP*



*Bicycle repair activities developed with support from the French Red Cross*

# Voices from the field:

Mohammed Alburai Cultural Mediator at the Slovenian Red Cross



**because I was  
one of them**

He is  
**#NotAlone**

*Find out more about Mohammed's work by clicking on the image above*

## Voices from the field:

"I am Lhou and I come from Algeria. I have signed a volunteer contract with the SRC.

I would like to tell you about my experience of my volunteer work, but foremost I would like to thank the SRC for their work in offering material and non-material aid to other people. They always try to find solutions for the easier and better lives of migrants. My story in the HSP started with my wish and talent to help other migrants who will stay in Slovenia for a while to fix their bicycles. But we also mustn't forget about those who have just arrived in Slovenia and also need help.

The SRC helps them with providing them with essential aid such as donations of SIM cards, clothing, shoes and hygiene kits, information etc. Thank you."

**Lhou, HSP volunteer and beneficiary from Algeria**



## Voices from the field:

"I have been working at the HSP as a volunteer now for a year and a half because it gives me at least a little sense of usefulness and that I can maybe help someone with things that are self-evident and easy for me, but for someone who has just arrived in Slovenia, they represent very big obstacles. I feel like it's really the least I can do to help guide someone, is to give people some sense of safety and acceptance, even if it's just for the hour or two we're together. I would like to do much more for them, but I hope that even my small contribution of kindness, openness, and help means a beautiful and shining piece of the mosaic in the lives of people who come to Slovenia with difficult stories in search of peace and an opportunity for a better life. I really like coming to the HSP office and to various SRC trainings, because there are also exceptional people there who I really like to see and chat with.

For me, volunteering at HSP is an opportunity to feel gratitude and meaning, which puts my problems aside and changes my perspective, because when I can help, my distress fades and I realize [...], I can always give something. I hope that I will be able to brighten the day of many more people and celebrate with them a new job contract, a new accommodation, enrollment in college or other important milestones. [...] I am very grateful for the opportunity to do something nice for someone in a supportive and pleasant environment."

**Aleksandra, HSP volunteer**

## Voices from the field:

"Volunteering as a part of the Slovenian Humanitarian Support Point, I aim to support integration therefore within the Social Cohesion activities I am supporting language learners.

Supporting people to learn Slovenian language is the most rewarding job I have ever done. Looking the progress of the aid seekers in their ability to speak up by themselves and in articulating their specific perspective motivates me to continue spending my time in this meaningful way. Listening, asking questions analysing Slovenian language is improving my own language skills. Learning is often very funny, sometimes due to huge surprise of the learners that so many very simple words have a multiple meaning For example: a leaf in Slovenian language means also a sheet, a page in the book, a newspaper etc. They are happy that they can say so much with a single word.

Volunteering is strengthening my patience, empathy, solidarity and finally sense of equality.

Thank you Slovenian HSP for this opportunity."

**Mirjana, HSP volunteer**

