

MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: SITUATION UPDATE

April 2023

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

KEY FIGURES

2,065

irregular arrivals recorded during the reporting month

7,266

total arrivals in 2023

1,092

persons accommodated in official reception facilities (as of 30 April 2023)

6%

children in families

6%

unaccompanied children

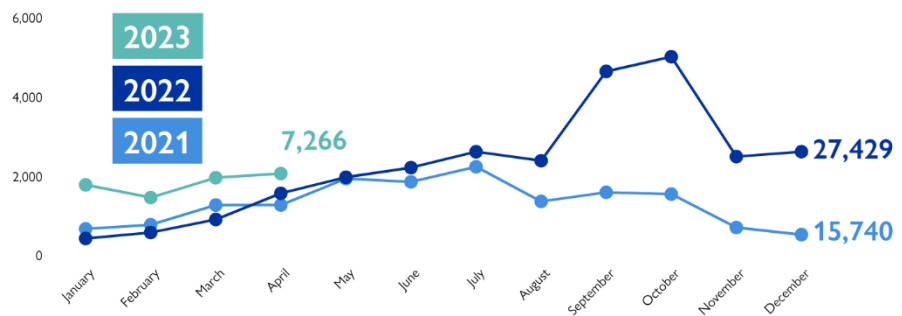
4%

single adult females

257

persons estimated to stay outside of reception centres (as of 12 April 2023)

In April 2023¹, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) recorded 2,065 irregular arrivals, which remained stable compared to the previous month (1,960). The majority of new arrivals declared to be from Afghanistan (40%), Morocco (18%) and Cuba (7%). Among those, 92 per cent (1,920) were issued an “Attestation of Expressed Interest in Asylum” (AISA). In the first four months of 2023, authorities have registered 7,266 arrivals in BiH, an increase of 86 per cent compared to the same four months in 2022.



As of the last day of the reporting period, 1,092 migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees are accommodated in Temporary Reception Centres (TRCs) and other private and NGO-led shelters in BiH. This represents a decrease of 18 per cent compared to the last day of the previous reporting period. The map below depicts the distribution of beneficiaries in BiH as of 30 April 2023.



¹ Reporting period: from 3 to 30 April 2023

Data is based on the statistics on arrivals and AISA shared on a weekly basis by the Ministry of Security (MoS).

CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA THIS MONTH:

- **The number of new registrations in TRCs remained stable compared to the previous month, but high compared to the same period last year.** In April, 3,474 new registrations were recorded. Afghan nationals were the most represented nationality, followed by Moroccan and Pakistani nationals. The high turnover in TRCs continues. As a general trend, **more people are arriving but spending less time in BiH**, transiting **rapidly** towards the border to the European Union.
- **Entries in BiH are mainly recorded through Serbia.** In April, out of the 215 migrants and asylum-seekers interviewed during transit in BiH, almost all respondents (91%) declared having entered BiH from Serbia.
- **Intended country of destination vary among different nationalities.** According to interviews conducted with migrants in transit in BiH, Afghan nationals largely stated that Germany is their country of intended destination, whilst most nationals of Morocco and Pakistan aimed to go to France. Cuban indicated that they intend to travel to Spain.
- In April, **six persons registered their asylum claims with the Ministry of Security (MoS)** – Sector for Asylum (six cases), three Refugee Status Determination interviews were conducted (involving three persons), two persons were granted subsidiary protection (two cases), and one person had their claim rejected. These decisions are not necessarily final and binding. As of 30 April, 67 asylum-seekers (52 cases) await processing and decision in BiH.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:

- During the **Interagency Coordination meeting**, the discussions focused on challenges related to the high turnover and short period of stay in TRCs and the need for protection support around the clock. Partner agencies are coordinating the response and adapting services to the high turnover, including through new modalities to collect feedback from beneficiaries.
- During the **Interagency Protection Coordination meetings**, discussions focused on readmission cases follow-up. Partners discussed and coordinated the establishment of tailored questionnaires in TRCs with questions specifically related to readmission procedures and beneficiaries' needs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- [IOM – DTM Report – Bosnia and Herzegovina - April 2023](#)
- [UNHCR - BiH Operational update – April 2023](#)
- [UNFPA - Monthly Operational Update – March 2023](#)
- [UNICEF - Podrška i prijatelj kojem se djeca mogu povjeriti](#)
- [SCI - Social Workers, Guardians of Children's Rights](#)
- [DRC - Border Monitoring Factsheet | DRC Danish Refugee Council](#)



IOM



In April, **IOM initiated a new round of beneficiary satisfaction surveys** in temporary reception centres (TRCs). The surveys are conducted bi-annually and provide insights into the quality of the assistance received and the general sense of safety and well-being of people during their stay in TRCs.

On 18 April 2023, the Minister of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Nenad Nešić, the Service for Foreigners' Affairs (SFA) Director, Žarko Laketa, the Mayor of Bihać, Elvedin Sedić, the UNHCR Representative in BiH, Lucie Gagné, and the IOM Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Western Balkans and IOM BiH Chief of Mission, Laura Lungarotti, **visited TRC Lipa**. Since November 2021, TRC Lipa is under the direct coordination and management of the SFA, with the technical support of IOM. This management model will be replicated in other TRCs, in line with the strategy to transition towards a state-led migration response.

From 24-27 April, **IOM in cooperation with the SFA, organized the training "Capacity building on protection-sensitive approaches to working with vulnerable categories"**, with participation of both IOM mobile teams and SFA officials involved in the mixed migration response in FBiH and RS. The main goal of the training was to strengthen cooperation between the SFA and IOM in the provision of information and referrals to vulnerable migrants.

In TRC Blažuj, **IOM, the SFA and partner organizations revised the existing accountability to affected population mechanisms** to find the best solutions to ensure migrants can exercise their right to participation in the decision-making process in the centre, particularly in light of the rapid turnover of beneficiaries in recent months which has affected the community representatives selection process as well as their availability in the long run. All stakeholders agreed to organize focus groups with migrants to discuss relevant topics on a weekly basis with interested beneficiaries as a substitute for the community representatives' Council (CRC) meetings. IOM will continue to hold CRC meetings whenever the circumstances allow.

665

Number of services provided by the IOM Mobile Team

3,474

Registrations in all TRCs

2,681

Emergency vulnerability screenings in TRCs

306

Persons identified with protection risks and needs

54,233

Meals distributed

29,943

Non-food items distributed



UNHCR



Art therapy workshop attended by refugees from Ukraine
@UNHCR/BHWI 2023

Some **300**
persons provided with information related to asylum in BiH

Some **60**
persons assisted with free legal aid related to asylum in BiH

15
People awaiting registration of their asylum claim with the
assistance of UNHCR / Vaša Prava BiH

More than **200**
persons assisted with psychosocial support

50
Social, recreational and occupational therapy sessions
organized

Some 30 information sessions on asylum in BiH were organized in Tuzla as well as in TRCs, including joint sessions with IOM. Majority of participants were from Afghanistan, Morocco, Pakistan, Iran and Algeria, among which many could be in need of international protection. UNHCR's partner Vaša prava BiH noticed increased interest for free legal aid services at the Immigration Centre but access to this detention center remains cumbersome.

Several social, recreational, and occupational therapy activities were organized throughout the month. For example, during a psychosocial support group session for Ukrainian refugees, some participants expressed interest in attending a hairdressing workshop. Following a participatory approach, this new activity was introduced with a refugee from Ukraine engaged as activity leader. A total of 21 persons took part in the workshop.

UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative (BHWI) also supported the enrolment of a Ukrainian refugee child in kindergarten. This enrolment in kindergarten enables the boy to socialize in accordance with his age, and also gives his single mother space for free time.

Following the launch of the UNHCR BiH Participatory Assessment 2022 [Report](#) in Sarajevo last month, similar events were organized in Bihać and Tuzla in April. Based on feedback from refugees, asylum-seekers and persons under subsidiary protection in BiH, the report serves as a roadmap to all stakeholders for addressing the needs of asylum-seekers and persons granted international protection in the country, ensuring they receive the support necessary for a safe and dignified life.

On 24 April, UNHCR marked the end of the renovation of the Safe House Vive Žene in Tuzla. Together with the Catholic Relief Services, UNHCR improved conditions in five safe house accommodations throughout the country for vulnerable individuals, which are made available for refugees and asylum-seekers.

UNICEF



During April, **UNICEF worked closely with the Ministry of Education Una-Sana Canton**. In May 2023 a vocational training programme for IT technician and electrician will start for children in TRC Borici.

In TRC's Ušivak and Borići **91 different children (21 girls) accessed non-formal education**, including catch-up classes, local and foreign language learning using the Akelius Digital Language course. UNICEF provided 15 backpacks and school supplies, including individual learning materials for children.

Non-formal education activities included English and local language learning, maths, geography, catch-up classes, and homework support. The methods used during the month: lecturing, demonstration, audio-visual presentation, individual approach, work in pairs and completed tasks as a class, together with the teacher presenting key points on the board. UNICEF has engaged teachers, assistants, and cultural mediators to support children with non-formal education, access to formal education and vocational training.

Workshops and activities at mother-baby corners focused on proper and healthy diet of children older than 24 months, counseling for parents and support for breastfeeding and pregnant women. During April 14 children (14 girls) and 14 parents (mothers) were reached with IYCF services, also including 3 pregnant and 9 lactating mothers.

UNICEF organized **second technical meeting with key actors to discuss recommendations for updating MHPSS** referral pathway and potential gaps when it comes to referring children with disabilities outside the school and preschool program to available services.

UNICEF organized a **regular USC Child Protection Working Group meeting** to discuss trends, new developments and ensure info sharing among key actors. During the meeting, information was shared regarding readmission and identified risks for child protection. It was concluded to initiate a follow-up meeting with key actors on this topic to continue close collaboration, coordination and prevent further risks.

554

Children on the move benefitting from 24/7 protection and care

196

UASC benefitting from the appointment and support of a legal guardian

91

Refugee and migrant children benefitting from structured non-formal education, language courses and vocational training

1

Refugee and migrant children supported with integration into the formal education system

46

Refugee and migrant children benefitting from Mother-baby corner activities



UNFPA



Language and communication skills activities in TRC Ušivak
@UNFPA 2023

During April, majority of identified cases of GBV reported experiences of psychological/emotional violence, followed by economic violence, and forced marriages with several cases of female genital mutilation and sexual violence. Due to the nature of identified types of violence which survivors reported being exposed to during movement or in the country of origin, **supportive GBV services were provided to meet the needs of beneficiaries.**

The UNFPA team in TRC Lipa provided timely supportive services for vulnerable persons who underwent the readmission process. Vulnerable young adults who arrived to TRC Lipa were provided with a safe space to access essential services, as well as protection sensitive accommodation in the Green zone. In TRC Borići, UNFPA supported 23 women who underwent the readmission process. Also, UNFPA commenced with implementing the GBV risk assessment in order to identify the GBV risks and protective factors, as well as possible gaps in the availability and access to services within facilities while awaiting readmission.

523

Number of comprehensive GBV/PSS services provided to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

384

Number of SRH services provided to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

740

Number of empowerment services provided to male migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in line with "Boys and young men on the Move" methodology

243

Number of empowerment services provided to female migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

77

Number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers educated on GBV

UNFPA implemented MHPSS services including additional work with previously identified cases who were in need, monitoring their situation and working on their progress, as well as, delivery of support to newly arrived women and adolescent girls, offering both initial psychological assessment and responding to emergency conditions and situations. Special attention and PSS care was focused on in working with pregnant women and single women. UNFPA supported highly vulnerable male GBV/Protection cases with PSS services in Sarajevo Canton, therewith responding to the conditions of previously identified GBV/protection cases, and improving their readiness to participate in various social aspects. In addition, efforts were made to respond to urgent conditions and persons seeking support.

Sexual and reproductive health service continued to be implemented in close coordination with SRH experts from local health centers, while in depth SRH examinations were realized in local health centers.



DRC



1,945

Number of medical examinations

6,412

Number of medical interventions

35

Number of referrals to Primary and Secondary Healthcare centers

1542

Number referrals through protection activities in TRCs and outreach

161

Number of persons reporting pushbacks in the reporting period

On the 7th of April every year, **World Health Day** is celebrated globally. This year, DRC organized thematic activities across the TRCs, highlighting the slogan "Health for All" and sharing key messages about the importance of continuous health care provision and "six tips on how to stay healthy while on the move". The activities began during futoor (iftar) at TRC Lipa, where DRC conducted preventive examinations and health promotion activities, engaging with the PoC's during the busiest time of the day.

During April, **DRC continued to promote health through educational sessions, vaccinations, and engaging with the wider community** to raise awareness about the importance of refugee and migrant health, all aimed at ensuring health for all during the month. In addition, DRC participated in the "European Immunization Week" Conference organized by WHO and Institute for Public Health FBIH and presented its work in providing health services for refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers, as well as its collaboration with state and educational institutions on mixed migration issues, during a panel discussion at the European Regional Meeting of the Medical Students' Association in Sarajevo.

In addition, **DRC Protection staff referred 1542 beneficiaries** to services including health, mental health among others inside and outside TRCs. In order to facilitate adequate service provision, DRC Cultural Mediators and bilingual DRC Protection staff were requested by other agencies to provide cultural mediation services approximately 19 times per day during this month.

DRC co-partner: Médecins du Monde (MDM)

- General symptomatology for the month of April: sleeping problems, symptoms of psychoactive substance abuse, feeling nervous, restless, or tense, symptoms of anxiety disorder, low mood.
- General trends are increased numbers of severe mental health issues including beneficiaries with history of psychoactive substances abuse where psychiatric consultations are conducted and followed by individual psychological counseling.



The Mixed Migration Response in Bosnia and Herzegovina is organized jointly by international, national and local partners, in close coordination with relevant authorities.

SCI



71

Potential unaccompanied and separated children benefit from child protection services outside of the reception centres

138

Potential unaccompanied children referred and escorted to TRC Ušivak

33

Children accommodated in Borići TRC enrolled in the local schools preparatory programme

In its commitment to address the plight of UASC outside the official support system for children, **SCI continues to deliver services in the TRC Blažuj as well as out of reception centers** in the Tuzla Canton, the Sarajevo Canton, and the Una-Sana Canton. SCI's dedicated teams of child protection officers and cultural mediators offer comprehensive information regarding available services, children's rights, and responsibilities. They also facilitate seamless referrals to relevant services while providing crucial psychosocial support.

With the arrival of warmer weather, more favorable travel conditions emerged, resulting in a slight upturn in the number of children entering BiH. During this period, **SCI provided assistance to 71 potential UASC outside reception centers**, which is a notable increase of approximately 25% compared to March.

In April, **SCI successfully referred 138 potential UASC identified in the TRC Blažuj to accommodations in the TRC Ušivak**. In collaboration with the Cantonal Center for Social Welfare Sarajevo and the Center for Social Welfare Ilidza, SC ensured that these children received comprehensive protection information, essential psychosocial support, and safe escort to the Ušivak TRC.

To foster educational opportunities, **SCI enrolled 33 children accommodated in TRC Borići in a preparatory school program**, jointly organized by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of Una- Sana Canton and SC. In addition, our after-school activities feature homework support and engaging sports programs.

SCI firmly believe in fostering integration, and our efforts extend to creating meaningful interactions between children from local communities and refugee and migrant children. In **celebration of World Autism Awareness Day**, both groups came together to raise blue balloons and sunflowers, symbolic of acceptance, understanding, and love.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH IN PICTURES



IOM training for BiH migration practitioners on rights-based approach to return counselling @IOM 2023



Focus group discussion on the asylum procedure in BiH at the Puž House in Tuzla @UNHCR/vaša prava 2023



Non-formal educational activity using the Akelius digital language course @UNICEF 2023



UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Ingrid McDonald, visit to UNFPA Women and Girls Center in TRC Borčić @UNFPA 2023



World Health Day Celebration @DRC partner MdM 2023



SCI Outreach activities in Velika Kladuša @SCI 2023



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