

# MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: SITUATION UPDATE

## July 2023

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

#### KEY FIGURES

**3,967**

irregular arrivals recorded during the reporting month

**16,898**

total arrivals in 2023

**2,082**

persons accommodated in official reception facilities (as of 6 August 2023)

**3%**

children in families

**4%**

unaccompanied children

**1%**

single adult females

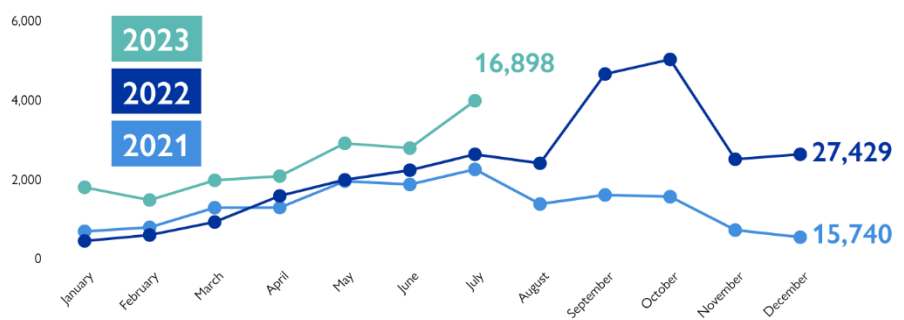
Main nationalities

**60%** Afghanistan

**21%** Morocco

**4%** Pakistan

In July 2023<sup>1</sup>, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) recorded 3,967 irregular arrivals, an increase by 43 per cent compared to the previous month (2,772). The majority of new arrivals declared to be from Afghanistan (52%), Morocco (25%) and Iran (Islamic Republic of) (4%). Among those, 95 per cent (3,757) were issued an “Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum” (AISA). In the first seven months of 2023, BiH authorities have registered 16,898 irregular arrivals in BiH, an increase of 64 per cent compared to the same period in 2022.



As of the last day of the reporting period, 2,082 migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees are accommodated in Temporary Reception Centres (TRCs) and other private and NGO-led shelters in BiH. This represents an increase of 55 per cent compared to the last day of the previous reporting period. The map below depicts the distribution of beneficiaries in BiH as of 6 August 2023.



<sup>1</sup> Reporting period: from 3 July to 6 August 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:

- **There has been a significant increase in the number of new registrations in the Temporary Reception Centers (TRC).** For example, in TRC Blažuj, in June, there was a total of 3,499 newly registered beneficiaries, while in July, the number increased to 4,913, representing an increase of 40 per cent. This trend is putting pressure on operational capacities, assistance and stocks of food and non-food items (NFIs), with more than 50,200 meals provided, 14,000 non-food items distributed, and 341 transportation services carried out.
- According to the interviews conducted with 289 migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees in July, **99.3 per cent of the respondents indicated that had been in BiH for less than two weeks at the time of the interview.** Most respondents (88.2%) had entered BiH through one of the border areas with Serbia while 11.8 per cent entered through Montenegro. **Almost half of the respondents had not been registered in a TRC at the time of the interview.** Fourteen per cent stated that they did not plan to register in any TRCs during their stay in BiH. This was mostly because people wanted to transit rapidly through the country to cross the border or because they had alternative accommodation arrangements.
- In July 2023, **13 persons registered their asylum claims with the Ministry of Security (MoS)** – Sector for Asylum (nine cases), three Refugee Status Determination interviews were conducted, two persons were granted subsidiary protection and three persons had their claim rejected. Two applications were otherwise closed. As of 31 July, 82 asylum-seekers (57 cases) await processing and final decision in BiH.

### INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:

- The **Interagency Coordination meetings held in July** focused on changes in camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) mechanisms. In Sarajevo Canton, the weekly coordination meetings will be held jointly for the two reception centres' teams, with participation of representatives of all partner organizations. These changes aim to strengthen information exchange and coordination and widen the space for the active involvement and leadership of local authorities, in line with the transition plan to increase ownership of the state over the mixed migration response.
- The **Interagency Protection Coordination** meetings' discussions focused on crucial issues affecting the beneficiaries' protection and well-being. Key outcomes from the meeting include a decision to develop a new roadmap for reporting Gender-Based Violence (GBV) incidents and enhance measures to effectively combat GBV. Furthermore, participants agreed to organize a GBV refresher training to improve the knowledge and capabilities of TRC staff and partners dealing with GBV-related cases sensitively and effectively. This initiative will strengthen the safeguarding mechanisms in place and foster a more supportive and secure environment for beneficiaries.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- [IOM – Migrant Mobility Situation Report in Bosnia and Herzegovina - July 2023](#)
- [UNHCR - BiH Operational update – July 2023](#)
- [UNFPA - Monthly Operational Update – April-June 2023](#)
- [UNICEF - Podrška i prijatelj kojem se djeca mogu povjeriti](#)
- [SCI - World Refugee Day - Better Together](#)
- [DRC - Border Monitoring Factsheet](#)



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

## IOM



Registration of new beneficiaries in TRC Blažuj @IOM 2023

**1,258**

Number of services provided by the IOM Mobile Team

**6,834**

Number of new registrations in TRCs (including pre-registrations)

**4,736**

Number of emergency vulnerability screenings in TRCs

**855**

Number of persons identified with protection risks and needs

**73,033**

Number of meals distributed

**41,952**

Number of non-food items distributed

IOM's Protection and IOM's Office of Staff Security developed new guidebook entitled "Smuggling and Trafficking in Persons - Prevention and Protection", which is intended for IOM and partner organizations' employees working in direct contact with beneficiaries. The guidebook and presentation which was rolled out in July aim to facilitate the recognition of indicators of human trafficking and/or smuggling.

In TRC Blažuj, the pre-registration zone was expanded to include an additional building and two container units, which increased the capacity of the zone from 106 to 383 sleeping spaces, all equipped with new beds and mattresses. The pre-registration zone helps IOM and SFA to process the high number of daily arrivals, so that beneficiaries can have access to accommodation and assistance while they wait for the medical screening and formal registration to take place.

On the joint initiative of IOM and the Technical Faculty of the University of Bihać, in coordination with the SFA and UNHCR, a **pilot Informatics and Programming project** was launched in TRC Lipa. The project aims to improve beneficiaries' skills and knowledge in the field of IT and programming.

In TRC Ušivak, IOM continues to organize regular **Community Council meetings** to ensure active engagement and participation of beneficiaries. As a result of the feedback received during a recent meeting, IOM's camp coordination and camp management (CCCM) team added yoga as part of the activities offered in the TRC .

Flash floods were reporting in TRC Ušivak on 4 July. The zone dedicated to accommodation of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) was severely affected. **IOM rapidly relocated the affected populations.** In collaboration with the Civil Protection Service of the Municipality of Hadžići, an assessment was conducted by a local company and a full cleaning operation was completed to clear the road and the Centre's areas affected by the flood.



## UNHCR



Football match bringing together children from local football clubs and children from marginalized groups @UNHCR 2023

In Bihać, [activities for social integration through football](#) were organized by UNHCR with the National Football Association of BiH, supported by the UEFA. The football game gathered 80 children from local clubs and children from vulnerable groups, including from refugee, asylum-seeking, and migrant families, from Roma communities, etc. The Football3 methodology was applied, where players collectively decide on the rules before the game. As Football3 is played without referees, players learn how to resolve conflicts themselves through dialogue. To foster sustainability, coaches in football associations and physical education teachers from elementary schools were trained on the methodology.

UNHCR organized two workshops with journalists in Tuzla and Bihać, which are key entry and exit areas in the country. Focus was put on how to report and communicate on mixed movements, basic principles of international protection and how to portray vulnerable groups with dignity through photography.

UNHCR's partner Vaša prava BiH organized a training session on the asylum procedure in BiH for the staff of the newly opened reception centre for unaccompanied minor asylum-seekers and vulnerable/separated children run by the Jesuit Refugee Service in Sarajevo, as well as for employees of the Centre for Social Work in Novi Grad and the Sarajevo Cantonal Centre for Social Work. By the end of July, Vaša prava BiH visited and provided information and legal counselling to nine UASC accommodated in the centre.

29 group information sessions on asylum and international protection in BiH were organized in Tuzla as well as in the four TRCs, including joint sessions with IOM. Majority of participants were from Morocco, Afghanistan and Iran, among which many could be in need of international protection.

UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative (BHWI) signed a contract with the Čitluk Health Centre's gynaecology department, where reproductive health examinations are made available to Ukrainian refugees.

326

persons provided with information related to asylum in BiH

58

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

1,680

persons assisted with psychosocial support

30

social, recreational and occupational therapy sessions organized

## UNICEF



Akelius class in TRC Ušivak @UNICEF 2023

In partnership with local NGO Fenix in TRC Borići and World Vision in TRC Ušivak **39 children (14 girls and 25 boys) and 29 parents out of which 8 pregnant women were reached with infant and young child feeding (IYCF) services** with the aim of empowering mothers to connect with their children and build healthy habits in children. In July, the MBU Pediatric Nurses held an educational workshop on pregnancy, breastfeeding, nutrition for babies and personal hygiene.

**175 children (31 girls and 144 boys including 110 UASC) were reached with structured non-formal education**, including foreign and local language learning, support in learning and catch-up classes within reception centers and schools. Teachers have utilized the Akelius Digital Language course through a blended teaching method. 139 children (16 girls) in TRCs Borići and Ušivak attended the Akelius Digital Language course.

UNICEF continued to facilitate and lead **Child Protection Working Groups (CPWG)** at the cantonal (Una-Sana and Sarajevo cantons) and state level as part of the child protection coordination. During the USC CPWG addressed the issue of accommodation and referral of unaccompanied children under the age of 10 with an emphasis on the best interest of the child.

UNICEF/WV Child protection and legal guardian teams provided support with **registration, accommodation and access to support services** for 477 newly arrived children in both TRCs ensuring 24/7 monitoring and support. The team also implemented 179 different activities for children in TRCs including educational, creative and sport activities.

**246 children were provided with mental health and psychosocial support** in both TRCs through individual and group sessions. The focus of psychosocial activities was on mental stability, acquiring skills such as: motivation, tolerance to failure, understanding emotions, cooperation and empathy. 58 children (22 girls) in both TRCs benefited from activities organized in Child Friendly Space.

**477**

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

**190**

UASC benefitting from the appointment and support of a legal guardian

**175**

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

**39**

Refugee and migrant children benefitting from Mother-baby corner activities

## UNFPA



Protection sensitive services and accommodation provision to vulnerable young men within the Green Zone @UNFPA 2023

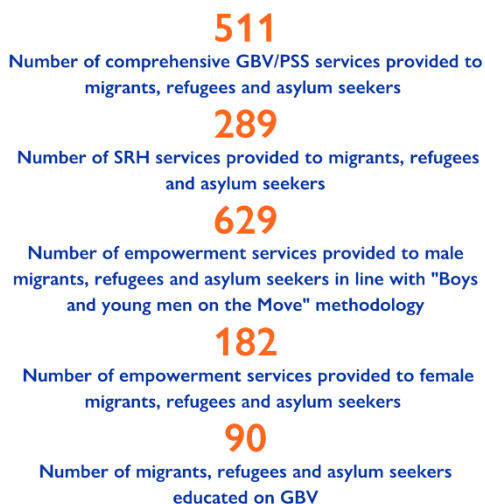
Throughout July, UNFPA in cooperation with SFA/IOM continued the implementation of the Green zone mechanisms in TRC Lipa and TRC Blazuj, ensuring safety and prevention of violence through adequate accommodation of young men, regular monitoring and proximity to relevant services. During the reporting month, UNFPA supported 366 young men with adequate protection-oriented accommodation and services in the Green Zones.

UNFPA held GBV trainings and workshops with female residents who had increased knowledge and skills related to GBV concepts. In addition to gender equality, special attention was paid to sexual violence as one of the most serious forms of violence, dealing with causes and consequences, protection and reporting mechanisms.

In July, UNFPA implemented diverse MHPSS services with vulnerable women and girls through the system of individual and group PSS support sessions. In addition, persons with neuropsychiatric disorders were supported through regular monitoring, guidance on the use of psychotherapy and general support in their functioning. Also, UNFPA MHPSS assistance focused on treating depression, sleep and eating disorders, as well as minimizing the effects originating from previous traumatic experiences. Continuing the good practice of empowering parents, UNFPA together with MdM implemented a group-type session improving parenting skills for 9 participants.

In close cooperation with local health centers in USC and CS, UNFPA supported women and girls, adolescent boys and young men with quality sexual and reproductive health services. UNFPA in cooperation with SRH experts from local health centers educated women and girls, adolescent boys and young men on sexual and reproductive health and general well-being, with special emphasis placed on family planning and pregnancy preservation.

The implemented activities were both educational and relaxing, helping residents improve capacities through socialization, learning and artistic expression.



## DRC



Provision of medical assistance to beneficiaries @DRC 2023

During the month of July, **DRC Medical teams performed more than 6000 medical screenings** for the new arrivals in the TRC BiH. When looking at the previous period, medical screenings have increased by more than 30% when compared to June. New arrivals are arriving in larger numbers during the weekends, which puts more pressure on DRC teams on Monday when many screenings are performed.

The DRC Medical team noticed that beneficiaries are refusing further treatment on the secondary health level, especially the orthopedic department. In communication with beneficiaries, they informed DRC that surgeries, plasters, or other orthopedic equipment are preventing them from going to "game". **DRC during July worked on health awareness activities to raise the importance of treating injuries on time.** Also, during the reporting week, three beneficiaries voluntarily left departments they were hospitalized for a week, reasons as going to "game".

### DRC co-partner: Médecins du Monde (MDM)

- Symptoms that were observed during individual counseling sessions were mostly substance dependence and withdrawal symptoms, sleeping problems, loss of appetite, lack of energy, lack of motivation and will, self-harming thoughts, ruminating thoughts and intrusive thoughts about traumatic event.
- Beneficiaries constantly report exposure to violence and extreme poverty during early age and childhood. Irritability, excessive shaking, nightmares, dryness in throat and chest pressure, and headache are often reported psychosomatic symptoms. In addition to these, anxiety-depressive symptomatology, acute stress reactions, but also psychotic symptoms were observed during counseling sessions in July.

**3,074**

Number of medical examinations

**10,007**

Number of medically attended by DRC staff

**48**

Number of referrals to Primary and Secondary Healthcare centers

**8,485**

Number referrals through protection activities in TRCs and outreach

**876**

Number of persons reporting pushbacks in the reporting period

## Save the Children



**124**

potential unaccompanied and separated children benefited from the outreach child protection services

**181**

Referrals to services for children outside reception centers

**281**

Potential UASC successfully referred and escorted to accommodation in the Ušivak TRC

**221**

Children enrolled in the Summer School programme

In July, SC assisted 124 UASC outside reception centers in Tuzla, Sarajevo, and Una-Sana Canton, 85% of whom were from Afghanistan. Our child protection teams, in collaboration with state institutions, continued providing vital services like information sharing, referrals, psychosocial support, temporary legal guardianship, and escort.

SC noted a consistent rise in arrivals at Blažuj TRC, with a 50% increase compared to June and **coordinated the referral and transfer of 281 potential UASC from Blažuj TRC to Ušivak TRC.** Together with the Cantonal Center for Social Welfare Sarajevo and the Center for Social Welfare Ilidža, SC ensured comprehensive protection, psychosocial support, and facilitated escort services to the Ušivak TRC.

**Simultaneously, over 221 children in the Una-Sana and Sarajevo cantons partook in our summer school programs,** a collaborative endeavor between Save the Children, local schools, and corresponding ministries. For the first time, 14 asylum-seeking children (3 girls and 11 boys) residing outside of Sarajevo camps participated in the program, thanks to a fruitful collaboration with UNHCR. This summer school, as a true example of inclusion and integration, provided a vibrant platform for local children, including those of Roma ethnicity, and children on the move to learn languages, express creativity, play, and collectively explore museums, art festivals, and nature.

In relation to this program, **SC head office in Sarajevo had the pleasure of hosting several participating children keen on understanding NGO operations.** When questioned about potential roles in such an organization, the majority favored the position of support officers, attracted by its ties to surveillance and fleet management. A select few aspired to director roles, with one girl setting her sights on procurement. This interaction underscored the importance of familiarizing young minds with the diversity of opportunities within NGOs, which in turn reflects the success of our summer initiative in broadening their horizons.





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH IN PICTURES



Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration counselling session in TRC Lipa @IOM 2023



Awarding of diploma for students who successfully passed a B/C/S language exam @UNHCR's partner BHWI 2023



Child-Friendly Schools activity in TRC Borići @UNICEF 2023



Joint UNFPA/MdM group session on improving parenting skills in TRC Borići @UNFPA 2023



Psychoeducational group sessions on mental health awareness @MdM 2023 (DRC partner)



Psychosocial Support activities for potential UASC in TRC Blažuj @SCI 2023



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