

# MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: SITUATION UPDATE

## April 2024

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

#### KEY FIGURES

**2,032**

irregular arrivals recorded during the reporting month

**8,576**

total arrivals in 2024

**1,115**

persons accommodated in official reception facilities (as of 05 May 2024)

**6%**

children in families

**8%**

unaccompanied children

**2%**

single adult females

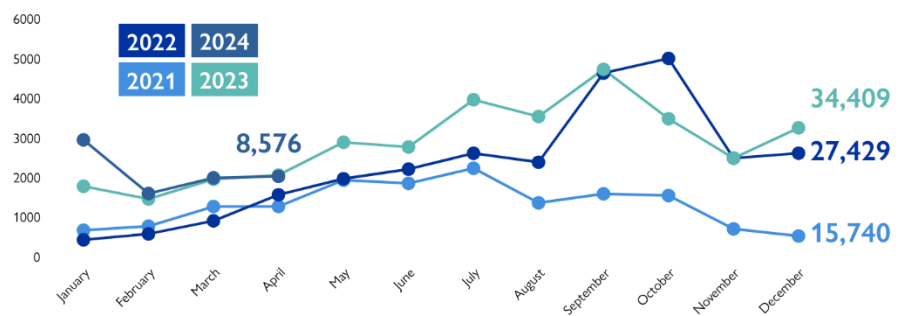
#### Main nationalities

**32%** Syrian Arab Republic

**23%** Afghanistan

**9%** Morocco

In April 2024<sup>1</sup>, authorities recorded 2,032 irregular arrivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), which remained stable compared with the preceding month (1,993 persons). The majority of new arrivals declared to originate from the Syrian Arab Republic (34%), Afghanistan (16%), and Morocco (8%). 83% of them (1,696 persons) were issued an “Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum” (AISA). In 2024 so far, BiH authorities have registered 8,576 irregular arrivals in BiH, which is 18% more compared with the same period in 2023.



As of the last day of the reporting period, 1,115 migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees were accommodated in Temporary Reception Centres (TRCs) and other private and NGO-led shelters in BiH. This represents a decrease of 47 per cent compared to the last day of the previous reporting period (2,136). The map below depicts the distribution of beneficiaries in BiH as of 05 May 2024.



<sup>1</sup> Reporting period: from 1 April to 5 May 2024

Data is based on the statistics on arrivals and AISA shared on a weekly basis by the Ministry of Security (MoS). All data provided in this report is based on information available to date.



### CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

#### MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA THIS MONTH:

- According to interviews conducted by IOM with 829 migrants and refugees<sup>2</sup> in April, **seventy-five per cent of respondents had already attempted to cross the border with Croatia at least once. Six per cent of these attempts were facilitated.** Almost all (99%) respondents stated that they failed because they were intercepted and returned by authorities, while the remaining one per cent of respondents said it was due to route closure. Only two respondents stated that they would not try to cross the border again.
- The survey asked migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees how they moved between cities and key locations in BiH. **Most (90%) stated they walked, while 80 per cent said that they had taken a bus to travel between some key locations.** Apart from the bus, 27 per cent also said that they had taken a taxi. Key informant interviews revealed the average taxi price per person within BiH was around 50 EUR.
- In April 2024, **the Sector for Asylum of the Ministry of Security registered the asylum claims of six persons** (six cases) and conducted eight Refugee Status Determination interviews (six cases). During the month, 14 persons (eight cases) were granted subsidiary protection, and two negative decisions were issued (two cases). Two applications were otherwise closed/suspended. As of 30 April, 149 asylum-seekers (108 cases) were awaiting processing and final decision in BiH.

#### INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:

- On 17 April, the UN agencies that are part of the **Interagency Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Network** in BiH, delivered a training on PSEA for organizations and stakeholders working in TRC Ušivak. The curriculum covered SEA definitions, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, procedures for accepting and handling complaints, suitable actions to take, referral mechanisms, investigation processes, and relevant documentation practices.
- **To mark the Eid al-Fitr, UN agencies and partner organizations organized joyful celebrations** in all four TRCs. In TRCs Blažuj and Lipa, a joint Eid prayer was organized. In TRC Ušivak, children helped with the distribution of delicious meals prepared in the community kitchen, where migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees cooked the most famous dishes from their homeland.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- [IOM – Migrant Mobility Situation Report in Bosnia and Herzegovina - April 2024](#)
- [UNHCR - BiH monthly update – April 2024](#)
- [UNFPA Gender-based violence against women and girls on the move study](#)
- [UNICEF - Podrška i prijatelj kojem se djeca mogu povjeriti](#)
- [SCI – Preparatory school program](#)
- [DRC - Border Monitoring Factsheet](#)

<sup>2</sup> Most (66%) of the respondents were between 18 and 29 years old and 88 per cent were single. Men represented 86 per cent of the respondents, while women made up the remaining 12 per cent.

## IOM



In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the transition to a State-led migration response remains a critical element of IOM's engagement with authorities. In a major step forward in the transition process, in Una Sana Canton, IOM has been working closely with the cantonal Public Health Institute (PHI) to ensure their efficient takeover from DRC of entry medical screenings in TRC Lipa and TRC Borići. The official take over by the PHI happened on 1st April and 1,115 entry medical screenings were conducted in April. In the Sarajevo Canton, the entry medical screenings transition process should be completed by the end of May.

IOM staff in TRC Blažuj and TRC Ušivak were trained on "Medical Action Procedures for IOM Staff When Medical Teams Are Not Present in Center". The training provided staff with knowledge on how to assess how serious medical issues are, choose where to refer a beneficiary based on the assessed health risk, and how to properly describe symptoms to emergency responders. The training included guidelines for handling situations such as high temperature, stomach pain, back pain, skin change, psychological change and headache.

In April 2024, regular coordination between IOM and the SFA and partners took place ensuring the relocation and admission of unaccompanied or separated children (UASC) from TRC Blažuj to TRC Ušivak, with the aim of providing protection-sensitive assistance to this vulnerable group. IOM teams in TRC Blažuj and TRC Ušivak coordinated the transfers of 131 UASC, 38 family members and eight single women.

In TRC Blažuj, several mental health support sessions were conducted to assist beneficiaries in need. A specific Psychological First Aid (PFA) session was organized with the support of Save the Children. This session included education on coping strategies and resilience, and the importance of community support for recovery.

**851**

Number of services provided by the IOM Mobile Team

**2,214**

Number of new assisted beneficiaries in TRCs

**2,053**

Number of emergency vulnerability screenings in TRCs

**614**

Number of persons identified with protection risks and needs

**85,656**

Number of meals distributed

**19,849**

Number of non-food items distributed



## UNHCR



UNHCR and its legal aid partner Vaša prava BiH (VP BiH) organized, in part with IOM, group and individual information sessions on the asylum procedure and international protection in BiH. Majority of the 174 participants originate from the Syrian Arab Republic, Afghanistan and Morocco.

UNHCR's psycho-social support partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative (BHWI) periodically marks important international days with forcibly displaced people. In April, a child under subsidiary protection from Syria who attends elementary school in Ilidža participated in the celebration of the World Autism Awareness Day together with his classmates, teachers and a BHWI pedagogue. Children released blue balloons from the bridge in Ilidža as a sign of support and acceptance of people with autism. In addition, BHWI celebrated Earth Day in TRC Ušivak, TRC Blažuj and in AC Delijaš by planting trees and flower seedlings together with 20 forcibly displaced persons.

All 30 asylum-seekers and persons under international protection who undertook B/C/S language exams in April successfully passed, which is a key step of their integration journey.

UNHCR donated computers to asylum-seekers and persons under subsidiary protection in the Tuzla and Brčko areas. This equipment will enable them to follow online B/C/S language classes and undertake administrative tasks related to their status, such as registering with the employment bureaus.

On 26 April, together with UNHCR, VP BiH organized a roundtable for attorneys and legal practitioners, focusing on asylum, international protection, the legal representation of asylum-seekers, and related international and domestic standards and practices. This purpose of this event was to further strengthen the capacities of legal experts to provide adequate legal assistance and ensure the protection of basic human rights, and ultimately improve access to rights for asylum-seekers in BiH.

**174**

persons provided with information related to asylum in BiH

**105**

persons assisted with free legal aid related to asylum in BiH

**64**

persons who are represented by UNHCR/Vaša prava BiH are waiting for the registration of their asylum claim

**152**

persons assisted with psychosocial support

**95**

social, recreational and occupational therapy sessions organized

## UNICEF



Educational workshop with girls in TRC Borići ©UNICEF 2024

In partnership with Fenix in TRC Borići and World Vision in TRC Ušivak 45 children (21 girls and 24 boys) and 59 parents and 6 pregnant women were reached with infant and young child feeding (IYCF) services. In April, pediatric nurses were focused on activities and workshops with the aim of empowering parents for the challenges that parenthood brings, workshops aimed at educating parents on child development and creating healthy habits.

242 children (26 girls and 216 boys, including 146 unaccompanied children) were reached with structured non-formal education, including foreign and local language learning and support in learning and catch-up classes. 194 children (25 girls) in TRCs attended the Akelius Digital Language course. Seven children from TRC Ušivak were enrolled in regular classes in primary school Pazarić, while 23 children (5 girls) were supported with preparatory classes in two primary schools in CS. During the reporting period, 10 unaccompanied boys have started attending a vocational training programme in the technical school Bihać.

UNICEF/WV Child protection and legal guardian teams provided support with registration, accommodation and access to services for 505 unaccompanied children (including 3 girls) in both TRCs ensuring 24/7 monitoring and support. Child protection teams planned and organized 155 psychosocial, educational, creative, and sports activities for unaccompanied children and children in families in both TRCs.

188 children were reached with mental health and psychosocial support in both TRCs Ušivak and Borići through 25 individual sessions and 8 group sessions. Psychosocial activities were organized with the aim of developing communication, social and emotional skills, encouraging attention and concentration, and providing emotional support. In addition, psychological crisis interventions were regularly provided to ensure psychological first aid for children on the move.

Throughout the reporting period 141 children (59 girls and 82 boys) benefited from activities in the Child Friendly Spaces in both TRCs.

**683**

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

**192**

UASC benefitting from the appointment and support of a legal guardian

**242**

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

**23**

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

**45**

Refugee and migrant children benefitting from Mother-baby corner activities



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

# UNFPA



GBV Education on Gender Inequality and Domestic Violence in TRC Lipa @UNFPA 2024

In April, UNFPA organized an introductory training session on Gender-based violence for the staff of the Institute of Public Health of Una Sana Canton therewith supporting the transition of medical screening services making sure that relevant staff is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively recognize and address Gender-based violence.

UNFPA, in close collaboration with SFA and IOM, has undertaken intensive efforts aimed at identifying and accommodating vulnerable individuals to the Green Zones, helping enhance the protection and safety. In the reporting month, 131 vulnerable young men were accommodated and supported through the Green Zones in TRC Blazuj and TRC Lipa. Residents were also included in various hygiene maintenance activities, instilling a sense of responsibility for maintaining a hygienic living environment. UNFPA, in collaboration with SFA at TRC Lipa, organized a Green Zone Council meeting where young men residing in the Green zone were provided with an opportunity to engage in discussions. The primary objective was to facilitate dialogue regarding their inclusion in activities and to reinforce the essential guidelines and regulations within the Green Zone.

**427**

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

**244**

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

**523**

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

**403**

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

**166**

Number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers educated on GBV

Through various standalone GBV workshops or as part of a series of related workshops, efforts were made to inform or educate residents of TRCs about concepts related to Gender-based violence, as well as various protection mechanisms and risk reduction from all forms of violence. The goal was to mitigate the risks of violence and, through raising awareness, influence attitudes, thoughts and behaviors related to the GBV phenomenon, deeply rooted in gender inequality.

UNFPA commemorated Earth Day by organizing flower planting activities alongside creative and educational workshops. Furthermore, within the Women and girls centers, an international celebration was observed for English Language Day, a regular occurrence attended by women through educational sessions. Beyond educational and creative pursuits, the month also saw a dedicated focus on recreational workshops like zumba and aerobics, emphasizing the significance of physical activity for overall health.



## DRC



In April, DRC teams noted a decreasing number of new arrivals in family TRC, families, and UASC, but also high turnover in all TRCs in BiH. **Within this period DRC medical teams provided 1232 medical screening in SC and provided 4,472 medical services.**

**Several cases of scabies have been diagnosed in the population during the medical screening process. Treatment was quickly provided by DRC staff.** Three cases of varicella were identified in TRC Borići in the second week of April. The beneficiaries were isolated during the treatment. DRC continues to track possible contacts in case new cases are detected.

**One new specific case was detected during the reporting period. The case of a child from Congo with a rare blood disease.** The beneficiary needed a blood transfusion and DRC staff organized all necessary medical check-ups in the Cantonal Hospital and organized transport so that further examinations could be provided.

In April, DRC organized **Advanced Life Saving training for all DRC medical staff**, which was led by ER Sarajevo, and all participants have finished the intensive training and obtained licenses for ALS. With this training, DRC health staff can adequately respond to all future emergencies in the field.

**Mental health teams are reporting an increased number of beneficiaries included in DRC programming**, with more than 70 cases active in BiH. An increasing number of beneficiaries with psychoactive drug abuse are refusing supporting therapy.

**1,084**

Number of medical examinations

**4,472**

Number of medically attended by DRC staff

**28**

Number of referrals to Primary and Secondary Healthcare centers

**83**

Number of referrals to psychiatrist

**748**

Number of psychological services provided

## Save the Children (SC)



Child Protection training in TRC Blažuj @SCI 2024

**244**

potential UASC benefited from the child protection services in 2 cantons

**81**

children in families benefited from child protection services in and out of TRCs

**44**

Children were newly enrolled in a preparatory school programme in USK, out of which 10 unaccompanied and separated boys

**75**

locations were visited across USK by the outreach teams identifying 558 people pushed back from Croatia, out of which 58 children.

Save the Children's child protection teams continue to operate in Una-Sana Canton and Sarajevo focused on identifying UASC and other vulnerable cases, referring them to key services, and delivering child-friendly information.

**In April, outreach teams in Una Sana Canton supported a higher number of UASC (59 potential UASC) and families compared to March.** There was a notable increase in the identification of single women and families (63 families, more than double than in March). The majority of families continue to be from Türkiye (17) and Syria (16) - a trend observed in BiH and the region. Reportedly, children and families with Turkish passports first arrive in the country as tourists, and face challenges in accessing accommodation and services which can expose them to increased risks.

**In Sarajevo, child protection teams in Blažuj TRC identified 185 potential UASC (20% increase compared to March) and provided support, referrals, and assistance with transfer to the designated zone for UASC in reception center Ušivak.** There was an increase in the number of newly arrived younger children, with 45 children aged 11-15 identified.

**In April, 36 boys and 25 girls participated in the preparatory school program in Una-Sana Canton run by the SC,** an increase of approximately 35% compared to March. A case of family separation highlighted the problem of children's motivation to go to school, worrying that they will be left behind when their family attempts border crossing. This highlights the importance of providing comprehensive support to the whole family in order to address their complex needs and risks.

**In collaboration with DRC, we have established regular weekly medical checkups for children accommodated in the TRC Borići enrolled in the preparatory school program.** A Child Protection training was organized in TRC Blažuj, to raise awareness about risks for children, vulnerability criteria, and procedures based on the child's best interests.



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH IN PICTURES



Organization of a football tournament in cooperation with FC Respekt @IOM 2024



Asylum-seekers and BHVI team planting trees and flower seedlings to mark Earth Day in TRC Ušivak @UNHCR/BHVI 2024



Mothers with toddlers in the Mother and Baby Unit ©UNICEF 2024



Planting trees to commemorate the International Earth Day in TRC Ušivak @UNFPA 2024



Provision of health services to beneficiaries @DRC 2024



Regular weekly medical checkups for children enrolled in the preparatory school program @SCI 2024



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