

MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: SITUATION UPDATE

January 2023

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

KEY FIGURES

1,781

irregular arrivals recorded during the reporting month

1,781

total arrivals in 2023

1,143

persons accommodated in official reception facilities

5%

children in families

8%

unaccompanied children

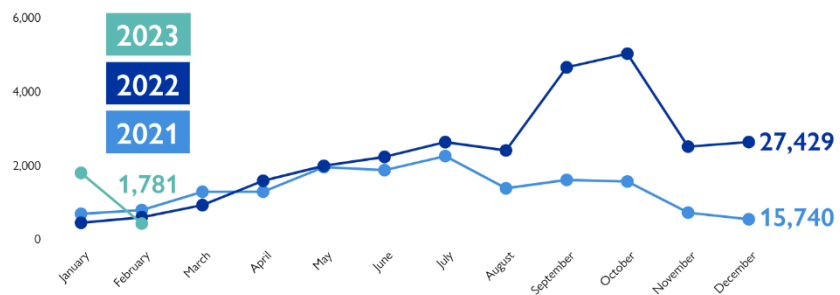
3%

single adult females

168

persons estimated to stay outside of reception centres (as of 19 January 2023)

In January 2023¹, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) recorded the irregular arrivals of 1,781 persons, a decrease by one third compared to the previous month (2,616) but an increase by over three times compared to January 2022 (516). The majority of new arrivals declared to be from Afghanistan (53%), Morocco (10%) and Cuba (10%). Among those arrivals, 91 per cent (1,622) were issued an “Attestation of Expressed Interest in Asylum” (AISA). Since the start of the mixed movement situation in 2018, 114,363 arrivals were recorded in BiH.



As of the last day of the reporting period, 1,143 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 15 per cent compared to the last day of the previous reporting period, indicating that the movements are slowing down as the winter sets in. The map below depicts the distribution of beneficiaries in BiH as of 5 February 2023.



¹ Reporting period: from 2 January to 5 February 2023

Data is based on the statistics on arrivals and AISA shared on a weekly basis by MoS.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA THIS MONTH:

- **The number of new registrations in TRCs decreased by 42 per cent compared to the previous month.** In January, 2,961 new registrations were recorded in all TRCs, compared to the previous month (5,099). Beneficiaries from Afghanistan continue to be the most represented nationality in the TRCs. The **turnover in TRCs was high**, with the majority of beneficiaries staying less than 10 days in the TRCs, directly affecting the continuity of service provision and participation mechanisms.
- In total, as of 19 January, **168 migrants were present outside of TRCs. This is a 32 percent decrease from the previous round but consistent with seasonal trends as fewer migrants reside outside in colder temperatures.** Out of all the migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees residing outside TRCs, 35 per cent were in the Sarajevo Canton and 27 per cent were in Republika Srpska. This was followed by Una Sana Canton (22%), Tuzla (8%), Bosnian Podrinje (5%), and Herzegovina-Neretva (4%). Over 37 per cent of those outside TRCs reported their country of origin to be Afghanistan. Consistent with broader trends in the region, Moroccan nationals continue arriving in increasing numbers and were the second most represented nationality outside of TRCs. The presence of Syrians is gradually increasing and represent 7.6 per cent of the population sample.
- In January 2023, **20 persons registered their asylum claims with the Ministry of Security (MoS) – Sector for Asylum (13 cases)**, three Refugee Status Determination interviews were conducted (involving seven persons), one person was granted subsidiary protection, three persons had their claims rejected (three cases) and three persons had their claims suspended (one case). These decisions are not necessarily final and binding. As of 31 January, 86 asylum-seekers (58 cases) await processing and decision in BiH.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:

- During the **Interagency Coordination meeting** held in January, discussions focused on challenges related to the accommodation of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) in Tuzla Canton. All stakeholders involved in the response agreed on the next steps to be taken in order to ensure the best possible solution.
- During the **Interagency Protection Coordination meetings** held in TRCs in January, discussions focused on the launch of the new protection welcome leaflet for beneficiaries. The leaflet will provide essential information related to protection services and will be translated into the most represented languages. Discussions focused on mainstreaming protection across all sectors of intervention, ensuring the principle of do no harm, prioritizing safety and dignity, enabling meaningful access, promoting accountability and fostering participation and empowerment.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- [IOM – Displacement Tracking Matrix Report – January 2022](#)
- [UNHCR - BiH Operational update – January 2022](#)
- [UNFPA - Monthly Operational Update – December 2022](#)
- [UNICEF - Podrška i prijatelj kojem se djeca mogu povjeriti](#)
- [SCI - Exhibition of children works created during the Winter School](#)
- [DRC - Border Monitoring Factsheet | DRC Danish Refugee Council](#)



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IOM



Transportation assistance provided by IOM Mobile Teams to vulnerable migrants referred by the SFA @IOM 2023

497

Number of services provided by the IOM Mobile Team

2,961

Registrations in all TRCs

1,450

Emergency vulnerability screenings in TRCs

149

Persons identified with protection risks and needs

61,391

Meals distributed

19,252

Non-food items distributed

In all TRCs, IOM led the daily coordination for the admission of newly arrived migrants with the Service for Foreigners' Affairs (SFA) and partner organizations. After the vulnerability screenings, more than 2,900 newly registered beneficiaries were accommodated in TRCs and provided with access to services according to their gender, age, family status and screened/identified vulnerabilities.

Within the scope of IOM's "Migrants talk to migrants" campaign, IOM carried out filmed interviews with nine beneficiaries from Cuba in TRC Borići. The campaign features stories of migrants currently stranded in the Western Balkans. The aim of the campaign is to enable migrants to make informed migration decisions, and to provide truthful information about all the risks associated with irregular migration. For more information, please access the platform [here](#).

IOM provided administrative, logistical and financial support, including reintegration assistance, to migrants who decide to return to their country of origin. In January, IOM reached 650 migrants through its assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR). A total of 104 counselling sessions were held to ensure that beneficiaries are well informed and aware of the assistance available during pre-departure, travel and post-arrival. There were four voluntary returns in the reporting period.

In the framework of the project "Improving migrant assistance and supporting local communities in Republika Srpska", representatives of the Norwegian Embassy to BiH visited Zvornik, Tuzla, and Bijeljina. The two-day visit was an occasion to showcase the project results achieved through the joint work of the IOM mobile teams and the SFA in supporting migrants in vulnerable situations.

In TRCs, IOM, UNHCR and partner NGO Vaša Prava organized interactive legal information sessions, raising awareness regarding the asylum-seeking process and the possibility of assisted voluntary return and reintegration; discussing the experience of the people on the move and risks associated with onward movement; and providing important contacts where to seek help when outside or inside TRCs.



UNHCR



Completion of sewing workshop in Sarajevo
@ UNHCR's partner BHWI 2023



UNHCR contributed to the delivery of winterization assistance with the donation of more than 600 pairs of waterproof winter shoes for asylum-seekers and other residents of TRC Borići and TRC Lipa in Bihać, being distributed with support from IOM.

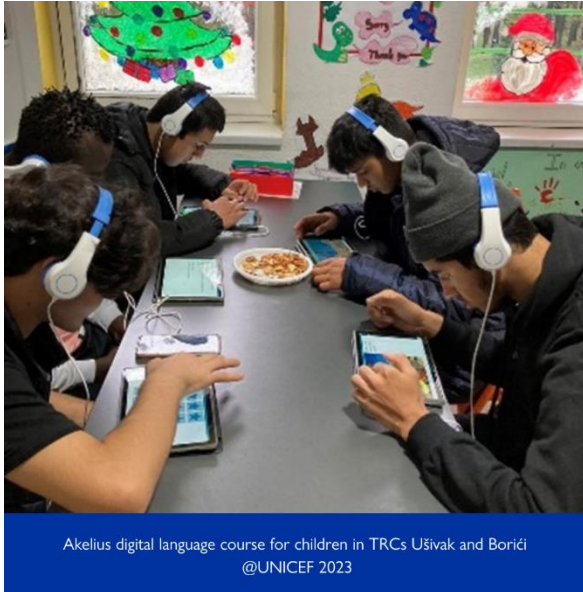
The Una-Sana Canton has been particularly affected by heavy rainfalls that caused flooding. To support cantonal and municipal capacities, UNHCR delivered 25 dehumidifiers. This donation is part of UNHCR's social cohesion activities in local communities hosting refugees and asylum-seekers that can benefit both local communities and people forced to flee.

UNHCR and its partner Vaša prava BiH organized some 30 information sessions in the Puž House in Tuzla as well as in TRCs, including joint sessions with IOM. Majority of participants were from Afghanistan, Morocco, Turkey and Iran. Some expressed interest for additional information and were counselled on right related to education, family reunification and accommodation possibilities during the asylum procedure.

Among all psychosocial support activities that took place in January, UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative (BHWI) organized a psychological support group on mental health and prevention of SGBV in TRC Ušivak with women from Iran, as well as a focus group discussion to raise awareness of the risks associated with irregular onwards movement, including SGBV risks, with women from Afghanistan and Iran.

As part of BHWI's occupational therapy activities, women from Turkey and Sri Lanka completed a five-day sewing workshop in Sarajevo. Participants showed high satisfaction, emphasizing that acquiring new skills increased their self-confidence and improved their self-image. Throughout the month, occupational activities were also carried out at individual level through sports, sewing, knitting, painting, etc.

UNICEF



447

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

151

UASC benefitting from the appointment and support of a legal guardian

97

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

19

Refugee and migrant children benefitting from Mother-baby corner activities

January marked the school winter break for children in Canton Sarajevo and Una-Sana Canton (USC). In partnership with World Vision and the Ministry of Education Canton Sarajevo, classes for primary school children and vocational training programs were organized. In total, 97 children were reached through non-formal education, including language learning with Akelius Digital Language courses.

In Medugorje, UNICEF supported 10 Ukrainian refugee children by providing educational opportunities through Ukrainian distance learning platforms and non-formal education including Croatian and English language classes. In one primary school in Una-Sana Canton, Akelius Language Learning classes for German and English were provided for local and migrant children. In partnership with the Ministry of Education Una-Sana Canton, the Faculty of Pedagogy Bihać and Save the Children, UNICEF organized a training for 43 German and English primary school teachers.

Workshops at mother-baby corners focused on proper and healthy diet of children older than 24 months. In total, 19 children (9 girls) and 19 parents (19 mothers) were reached through Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) services.

On 31 January UNICEF organized and facilitated USC Child Protection Working Group. The main topics of the meeting were related to the presentation of the SOP for the protection of children in emergencies. The presented SOP was developed through the project "Improved protection of children in emergencies" implemented by UNICEF and IP World Vision.

UNICEF and World Vision child protection teams provided support to 222 newly arrived unaccompanied children in TRCs. 111 children in families benefited from Child Friendly Space activities and 52 unaccompanied children were provided with mental health and psychosocial support. UNICEF/WV within the multidisciplinary team in TRC Ušivak provided support to SFA for 31 interviews related to profiling processes. In total, 228 children were provided with winter NFI.

UNFPA



Women and Girls Committee meeting in TRC Borići @UNFPA 2023

438

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

395

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

654

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

292

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

73

Number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers educated on GBV

UNFPA teams in TRC Blazuj and TRC Lipa in close cooperation with SFA/IOM continued to implement the protection segment intended for vulnerable young men, which is reflected in timely accommodation and delivery of comprehensive support. In January, 274 young men were accommodated in Green zones, recording a slight decrease in the total number of newly arrived vulnerable young men. UNFPA held GBV workshops for women and young men in TRCs with the aim of promoting gender equality and combating hyper masculinity and hyper femininity.

UNFPA GBV specialists provided participants with guidelines on ways to combat gender inequality. Additionally, young men in TRC Lipa participated in the training on GBV educating on human trafficking and GBV, with emphasis on providing better understanding on the concept of human trafficking.

UNFPA MHPSS experts conducted psychological assessments of newly arrived women and girls to identify the psychological state, as well as to tailor and deliver services accordingly. UNFPA provided 180 MHPSS services to women and girls, including GBV survivors. Additionally, 162 PSS services were delivered to male GBV survivors and highly vulnerable persons in Canton Sarajevo.

The UNFPA Women and Girls Committee Meeting was held with 9 representatives from Cuba, Iran and Jordan in TRC Borići. The Committee meeting provided opportunity for discussion and suggestions on improving living conditions in the TRC. Women were also encouraged to speak about women's rights and voice ideas on new activities.

During January, UNFPA team implemented various relaxing and creative empowerment sessions with women and girls, adolescents and young men recording 1412 participations in total. UNFPA in cooperation with CSO "U Pokretu" initiated and enabled implementation of empowerment sessions with focus on social and relaxing activities for women and girls in the Youth Center Bihac, additionally, 199 young men from TRC Lipa participated in sports activities organized in the HSC Arena in Bihac.



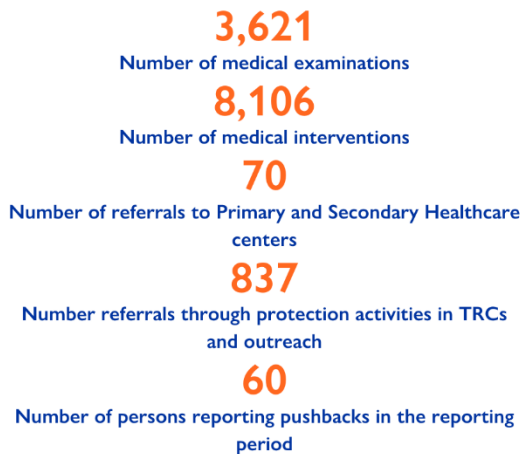
DRC



Regular bi-weekly vaccination of children against vaccine preventable diseases in TRC Ušivak @DRC 2023

In January several cases of Measles were reported in Serbia, where immunization coverage on this disease is below 75%, similar as in BiH. When it comes to Measles, WHO recommends immunization coverage above 95% to avoid outbreak and epidemic situations. Considering that children living in collective accommodations are more vulnerable to Measles DRC further strengthened the entry screening procedures for children arriving to TRCs, with emphasis on previous immunization.

Moreover, DRC established regular vaccination against vaccine preventable diseases, in TRC Ušivak on a biweekly basis and in TRC Borići on a monthly basis, all in coordination with Public Health Institutes and Primary Healthcare Centers. In January, 41 children were vaccinated with 102 doses of vaccines through these activities. High interest for the vaccination among children came as a result of continuous individual and group health promotion and educational sessions, facilitated by DRC medical professionals on vaccine preventable diseases and importance of immunization.



DRC co-partner Médecins du Monde (Mdm):

General symptomatology for the month of January: psychoactive substance abuse as a mechanism to cope with high levels of stress, feeling nervous, restless, or tense, apathy, low mood, fear, sadness, symptoms of depression.

General trends: **highly increased numbers of psychiatric consultations**, including new beneficiaries in Harm Reduction Programme (psychoactive substance abuse). In total, **100** psychiatric care consultations were conducted for **75** individuals.

MdM team is receiving increased referrals from IOM protection team after screening of new beneficiaries in need for psychiatric or psychological services. In total, MdM assisted **272** new direct beneficiaries and held **199** individual psychological counselling sessions and **388** participations to group (empowerment and psychoeducational) sessions.



SCI



Psychosocial Support activities in TRC Blažuj while waiting for accommodation in Ušivak TRC @SCI 2023

Save the Children Outreach teams in Tuzla, Sarajevo and Una-Sana Canton regularly monitor the situation and protection risk unaccompanied and separated children face outside of reception centers, including on keeping children safe and supporting them to exercise their rights.

In order to ensure continuity of support for unaccompanied and separated children outside of reception centers, Save the Children signed a continuation of the Memorandum of Cooperation with Ministry of Labour, Social Policy, Displaced Persons and Refugees of Sarajevo Canton and Cantonal Center for Social Welfare Sarajevo.

In cooperation with Center for Social Welfare Ilidža, Save the Children team ensure that unaccompanied and separated children do not stay in Blažuj reception center and that they are accommodated in designated zone in the reception center Ušivak, which was confirmed on the meeting held on 31st of January.

In January, during the school break, Save the Children and the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Una-Sana Canton organized **four-week “Winter School” for children on the move** accommodated in Borići TRC and for children from five local elementary schools in Una-Sana Canton.

Various activities (educational, creative, sports) as well as visits to local communities were organized. During these activities children on the move had an opportunity to spend time with their peers from the local community. The end of winter school is marked with the exhibition of works created during the activities and took place on Friday the 20th in the Museum of Una-Sana Canton showroom.

108

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

17

Unaccompanied children supported with legal protection and accommodation from Outreach locations to reception centres

150

Potential unaccompanied children supported in Blažuj reception centre and relocated to Ušivak reception centre

12

Children (including UASC) benefit from HEART school preparatory program

88

Referrals sent to institutions, agencies and organizations



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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH IN PICTURES



Visit of the Ambassador of Norway to Bosnia and Herzegovina to TRC Ušivak @IOM 2023



Joint IOM – UNHCR/Vaša prava BiH info session in TRC Borići @UNHCR's partner Vaša prava BiH 2023



Activities for children within the Child Friendly Space (CFS) in TRC's Ušivak and Borići provided by UNICEF animators @UNICEF 2023



Protection-sensitive accommodation and complementary services for vulnerable young men within the Green zone in TRC Blažuj @UNFPA 2023



MHPSS group activity in TRC Lipa @DRC 2023



Exhibition of children's works created during the "Winter School" @SCI 2023



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