

MIXED MOVEMENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: SITUATION UPDATE

June 2023

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

KEY FIGURES

2,772

irregular arrivals recorded during the reporting month

12,931

total arrivals in 2023

1,348

persons accommodated in official reception facilities (as of 2 July 2023)

4%

children in families

5%

unaccompanied children

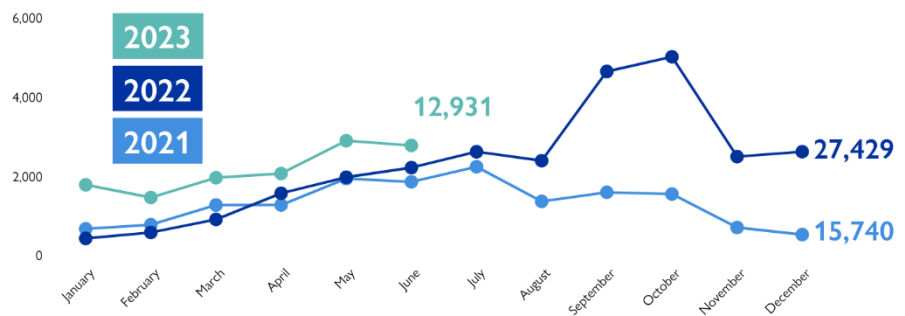
1%

single adult females

235

persons estimated to stay outside of reception centres (as of 8 June 2023)

In June 2023¹, authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) recorded 2,772 irregular arrivals, which remained stable compared to the previous month (2,893). The majority of new arrivals declared to be from Afghanistan (42%), Morocco (24%) and Bangladesh (11%). Among those, 95 per cent (2,642) were issued an “Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum” (AISA). In the first five months of 2023, authorities have registered 12,931 irregular arrivals in BiH, an increase by more than half compared to the same six months in 2022.



As of the last day of the reporting period, 1,348 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 19 per cent compared to the last day of the previous reporting period. The map below depicts the distribution of beneficiaries in BiH as of 2 July 2023.



¹ Reporting period: from 5 June to 2 July 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:

- During the reporting period, there has been a significant increase in the number of newly registered (including pre-registered) beneficiaries in the TRCs compared to the previous month. For example, only in TRC Blažuj, in May, a total of 2,395 persons have been registered (including pre-registration), while in June, the number of registrations (including pre-registration) rose to 3,499. This increase coupled with the high turnover is putting pressure on operational capacities, assistance and stocks of food and non-food items (NFIs).
- In the first six months of 2023, authorities in BiH have registered 2,269 Moroccans, constituting the second largest nationality in the country. IOM interviewed 115 Moroccans in TRCs Blažuj and Lipa in June 2023 to better understand their demographic profiles. Three-quarter of the survey sample consisted of single, adult men under the age of 29. Half of the respondents stated that their highest level of completed education was primary school. When asked why they had decided to leave Morocco, 92 per cent of respondents cited economic reasons. In terms of intentions, half indicated they wanted to travel to Italy. Lastly, 28 per cent of respondents reported having experienced at least one form of violence, exploitation or abuse during the journey.
- In June 2023, five persons registered their asylum claims with the Ministry of Security (MoS) – Sector for Asylum (three cases), one Refugee Status Determination interview was conducted but no decision was issued. Three applications were otherwise closed. As of 30 June, 70 asylum-seekers (50 cases) await processing and final decision in BiH.

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION:

- During the **Interagency Coordination meetings** discussions focused on challenges related to the short length of stay in TRCs, directly impacting the delivery of assistance and services. During the coordination meetings all partners presented their daily and monthly activity plans, ensuring that activities do not overlap and that effective coordination mechanisms are in place during the holiday season.
- The **Interagency Protection Coordination meetings'** discussions focused on coordinated efforts to respond to the sudden increase of daily temperatures. With the aim of preventing potential health and safety risks, refreshments were distributed several times a day. In addition, vulnerable groups (elderly people, persons with injuries, persons in need of psychological support, etc...) were identified in order to prevent additional risks and provide immediate assistance when needed.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- [IOM – DTM Report – Bosnia and Herzegovina - June 2023](#)
- [UNHCR - BiH Operational update – June 2023](#)
- [UNFPA - Monthly Operational Update – April-June 2023](#)
- [UNICEF - Podrška i prijateljij 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



Waiting zone for IOM emergency screening in TRC Blažuj @IOM 2023

1,169

Number of services provided by the IOM Mobile Team

4,841

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

3,715

Number of emergency vulnerability screenings in TRCs

415

Number of persons identified with protection risks and needs

58,913

Number of meals distributed

28,180

Number of non-food items distributed

On 8-9 June 2023, the Ministry of Security (MoS) of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) co-hosted the **third Sarajevo Migration Dialogue in Jahorina, BiH**. Facilitated by IOM, the conference gathered **167 high-level representatives of the Western Balkans, the EU and other partners** to discuss sustainable migration governance. Building on the **Skopje Declaration** adopted in November 2022, the new *Action Plan for Sustainable Migration Governance in the Western Balkans 2023-2025* accepted in June 2023 and presented at the conference, proposes 21 key measures to address the access to regular pathways and work towards a holistic return management approach.

To address emerging needs, **IOM, in collaboration with the SFA, expanded the capacity of the pre-registration area in TRC Blažuj**. With 22 additional sleeping spaces, the pre-registration area now has a total capacity of 106 spaces. Furthermore, information notices were created for migrants staying in the Pre-registration Zone. The notices contain details about the duration of stay in the Zone, information about the check-out process, and instructions on the steps preceding registration with the SFA and IOM, enabling migrants to access services available in the centre.

IOM and the SFA organized a training to enhance protection and assistance to unaccompanied and separated children, with participation of both IOM mobile teams and SFA officials involved in the mixed migration response, as well as representatives of centres for social work, UNICEF, Save the Children, and Jesuit Refugee Service. The objective of the training was to strengthen cooperation and harmonize practices to better protect and assist vulnerable migrants.

In June, IOM marked the one-year anniversary of its sub-office in Tuzla. In the past year, thanks to the efficient cooperation with authorities of the Republika Srpska, 1,500 migrants have been assisted by the Mobile Teams active in Tuzla, who delivered 15,000 Non-Food Items and 600 information sessions on assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR).



UNHCR



UNHCR organized several events across the country to celebrate World Refugee Day. In Sarajevo, a mural was unveiled, representing the hospitality of the local community in BiH towards refugees. The mural is located in the Municipality of Ilidža, which has welcomed numerous refugees forced to leave their homes. It was painted by students of the Sarajevo Academy of Fine Arts together with an asylum-seeker. UNHCR also supported an academic community gathering in Tuzla, where discussions were held regarding the current asylum law and planned amendments. Lastly, a football tournament for children was organized in Bihac.

More than 30 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 Afghanistan and Morocco, among which many could be in need of international protection.

UNHCR organized and facilitated capacity-strengthening events for 70 staff from the Regional Police Offices in Bijeljina, Zvornik and Tuzla, which are strategic entry points in the country. Focus was put on mixed population flows and the asylum procedure in BiH, with IOM, OSCE, UNICEF and UNDSS also contributing to the presentations. UNHCR, together with the MoS, also organized a training for 21 staff from the Border Police, SFA and Centre for Social Welfare in Medjugorje on access to territory and the national asylum procedure.

There is increasing interest from persons in need of international protection to learn the local language. In June, 58 students attended classes, divided into nine groups ranging from A1 – beginner to C1 – advanced levels.

On the occasion of the Pride Month, UNHCR co-organized a movie screening followed by a panel discussion about the challenges LGBTIQ+ refugees face, and the opportunities they have in BiH. Discussions focused on the importance of a welcoming community for LGBTIQ+ refugees and positive practices were shared by UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative working with vulnerable refugee and asylum-seeking populations in BiH.

Some **350**
persons provided with information related to asylum in BiH

Some **70**
persons assisted with free legal aid related to asylum in BiH

20
People awaiting registration of their asylum claim with the assistance of UNHCR / Vaša Prava BiH

Some **900**
persons assisted with psychosocial support

49
Social, recreational and occupational therapy sessions organized



UNICEF



Distribution of NFIs in Mother Baby Corner in TRC Borići
@UNICEF 2023

425

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

109

UASC benefitting from the appointment and support of a legal guardian

166

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

28

Refugee and migrant children benefitting from Mother-baby corner activities

In partnership with the local NGO Fenix in TRC Borići and World Vision in TRC Ušivak, **workshops at mother-baby corners focused on proper and healthy diet of children** older than 24 months. Mothers were provided with a safe and private space for breastfeeding. 166 children (29 girls) were reached with structured non-formal education, including foreign and local language learning, support in learning and catch-up classes within reception centres and schools. Teachers have utilized the Akelius Digital Language course through a blended teaching method.

UNICEF/WV supported children in TRC Borići with distribution of backpacks and school supplies. In partnership with World Vision, UNICEF has deployed teachers, assistants, and cultural mediators within TRCs Borići and Ušivak.

UNICEF organized a workshop focused on Centers for Social Welfare (CSW) and the role of the social and child protection system role in supporting children on the move. The MoS, the SFA, cantonal ministries, CSWs, the EU, UN agencies and NGO partners were represented. Good practices were discussed including the important role of CSW in legal guardianship in line with the legal framework. The workshop generated increased interest of CSWs and cantonal ministries in further integrating refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children into local child protection systems.

UNICEF continued to coordinate child protection response with other key actors ensuring that the key topics are discussed through Child Protection Working Groups at the cantonal (Una-Sana Canton and Sarajevo Canton) level.

In June, a total of 49 new children arrived in the UASC zone in TRC Borići, and TRC Ušivak the number of new arrivals was 245, mostly from Afghanistan and Morocco. 76 children (28 girls) in TRCs Ušivak and Borići benefited from 97 different activities organized in Child Friendly Space. In addition to the regular distribution of NFIs for new arriving children accommodated in TRCs Borići and Ušivak, UNICEF handed over 74 tracksuits, 30 blankets, 78 pairs of socks and 272 sets of underwear to IOM and FENIX in TRC Borići for the purpose of supporting new arriving R/M children.



UNFPA



UNFPA organized the Gender Based Violence (GBV) working group in USC ensuring partners' coordinated actions in prevention and mitigation of GBV and accountability to persons at risk or survivors of GBV. Participants discussed current trends, challenges, referral mechanisms and GBV risk assessment of persons who underwent the readmission process, resulting in identification of next steps in addressing these topics.

UNFPA provided increased number of GBV services in response to cases of sexual violence against women. Among males, identified forms of violence include physical and psychological-emotional, with imprisonment, torture, and threats of death due to sexual orientation. Violence happened during movement or in the countries of origin.

UNFPA MHPSS services enabled the identification of needs newly arrived women and girls, monitoring their condition during their stay in the TRCs. Additionally, special emphasis was placed on neuropsychiatric cases through monitoring of psycho-pharmacotherapy use. Young mothers and women planning to start a family were educated and empowered through the Young Mother's Club program, while Teen Club group activities enabled the girls to interactively acquire information and advice from key areas of interest regarding their developmental period.

In order to raise sexual diversity and gender equality awareness and contribute to female violence reduction, UNFPA marked Pride Month, and together with Young Men implemented Men Who Support Women campaign, and also organized the Today we cook for you event with the adolescents breaking down the household chores gender stereotypes.

UNFPA supported the Urological ward in the Cantonal Hospital in Bihać with bedding and sleepwear helping enhance the quality of care and services. Young men and women visited the Center for Contemporary Culture Krak in Bihać, enabling active participation in various activities as part of the Elsewhereas radio project.

576

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

330

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

746

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

205

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

140

Number of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers educated on GBV



DRC



MdM presentation Mental Health of People on the Move at the University of Tuzla @DRC partner MdM 2023

Due to ongoing challenges related to human resources and the vacation season, medical technicians from Primary Health Centers (PHCs) faced difficulties in fulfilling their responsibilities in the TRCs, leading to a decline in medical interventions. To address this situation, the medical staff of the **DRC stepped in to provide additional support to the PHC doctors**, offering both medical assistance and administrative aid.

However, despite the high turnover of Persons of Concern (PoCs) in the TRCs, which affects their motivation to seek healthcare, **a severe medical case has been identified in TRC Blazuj**. The individual is currently suffering from severe heart failure and urgently requires a heart transplant, which is unavailable within the country. In response, the DRC is actively seeking support from relevant stakeholders to collaborate and explore alternative options or organizations that could potentially provide a solution. The primary objective is to ensure that life-saving treatment is secured for the affected PoC.

DRC co-partner: Médecins du Monde (MDM)

- Predominant symptomatology: withdrawal symptoms, irritability, sleeping problems, withdrawal from others, tremors, excessive worry, changes in appetite, and suicidal thoughts.
- Most of the beneficiaries who need psychiatrist service have a minor or major problem with drug use, and a part of the beneficiaries have problems with earlier traumatic experiences and therefore need support in pharmacotherapy to help them deal with severe symptoms of intrusive thoughts, sleep problems, irritability, and nervousness.
- Turnover and the fluctuations in the TRCs remain very high which have an impact on MHPSS activities.

1,673

Number of medical examinations

6,711

Number of medical interventions

24

Number of referrals to Primary and Secondary Healthcare centers

4873

Number referrals through protection activities in TRCs and outreach

225

Number of persons reporting pushbacks in the reporting period

Save the Children



Summer School for Children on the Move and children from four local elementary schools @SCI 2023

107

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

97

Referrals to services for children outside reception centers

492

Information-sharing instances to children and adults

187

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

16

Children accommodated in Borici TRC enrolled in the preparatory programme in local schools and in Summer School

In June, SC identified and supported 107 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) outside reception centers in Tuzla, Sarajevo, and Una-Sana Canton, marking a 64% rise from May. In cooperation with relevant state institutions, SC specialized child protection teams continued providing vital child protection services, referrals, and psychosocial support.

SC effectively referred and escorted 187 potential UASC from Blažuj TRC to the Ušivak TRC. A peak of 30 minors between the ages of 7 and 15 was observed in June. In partnership with the Cantonal Center for Social Welfare Sarajevo and Center for Social Welfare Ilidza, SC guaranteed comprehensive protection, psychosocial support, and safe escort to Ušivak TRC for these children.

Kindly invited by IOM to be a guest lecturer at the "Strengthening of Cooperation and Protocols Concerning Assistance to Unaccompanied Minors" training, SC presented a situation for children on the move, focusing on critical risks and recommendations. SC also organized a CPWG for Tuzla Canton. At this meeting, UN agencies, NGOs, and state institutions concurred on the need for a more systematic approach to accommodating and assisting the most vulnerable transients.

Since 2023, SC has enrolled 136 children at Borici TRC into a preparatory school program, with 16 new additions in June. However, no enrollments into regular classes occurred during the latter part of the academic year due to the transient nature of the Borici TRC population and their very short stays in the center.

In a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of USC, SC enrolled 78 children, both local and from Borici TRC, into a Summer School. This diverse program, running until mid-August, aims to bolster various skills and knowledge, fostering integration and meaningful interaction among different social groups.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH IN PICTURES



High-level representatives of the Western Balkans during the third Sarajevo Migration Dialogue @IOM 2023



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



Family zone activity in TRC Borići @UNICEF 2023



Donation to the Cantonal Hospital Bihac @UNFPA 2023



International Day against Drug Abuse and Illegal Trafficking workshop @DRC 2023



Etiquette class for Children on the Move and children from four local elementary school @SCI 2023



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