# Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

The authorities reported **1,398** irregular arrivals in October, 30% less than in the previous month (1,987).[1]

Top three declared countries of origin are Egypt (20%), Afghanistan (20%) and Morocco (9%).[1]

**76%** were issued an "attestation of expressed intent to seek asylum" (AISA).[1]

The Sector for Asylum of the Ministry of Security (MoS) registered the asylum claims of **21** people and conducted **10** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews.

In October, **7** positive decisions were issued, one granting refugee status and six granting subsidiary protection, alongside **8** negative decisions. 23 applications were suspended / terminated.[2]

## SELECTED POPULATION DATA (END OF OCTOBER)

**47** people represented by UNHCR/Vaša prava BiH waiting for the registration of their asylum claim

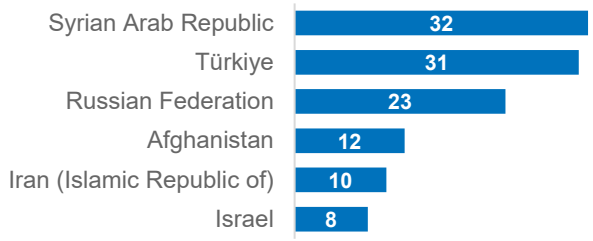
**200** asylum-seekers with claims pending processing and final decision

**279** people under international protection (**47** with refugee status and **232** under subsidiary protection)

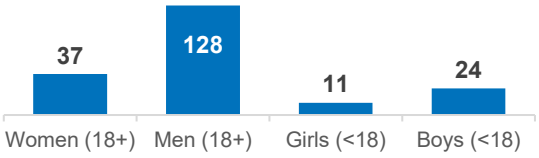
**8** stateless people and people at risk of statelessness

## ASYLUM-SEEKERS (END OF OCTOBER)

### TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



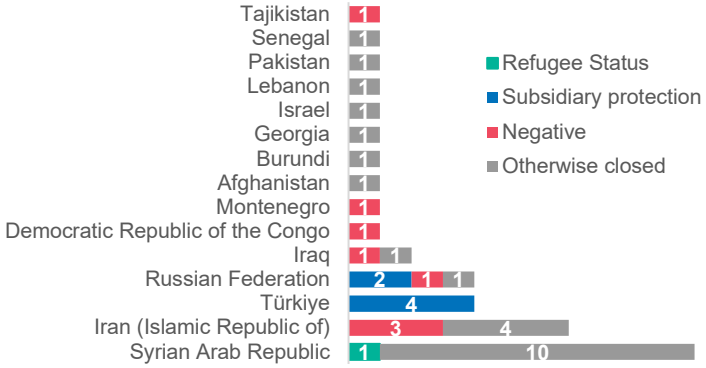

### AGE AND GENDER




Of **35** children, **11** were unaccompanied or separated at the time of registration

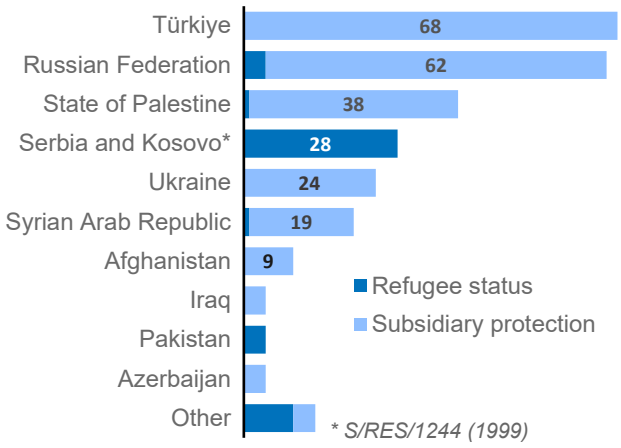
## DECISIONS[2] IN OCTOBER

### PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)




## PEOPLE UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (END OF OCTOBER)[2]

### TOP-10 COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN




[1] *Data based on weekly statistics from the Ministry of Security.*

[2] *Decisions not necessarily final and binding. Figures refer to the number of people covered by decisions.*

## STRENGTHENING LEGAL CAPACITIES IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

UNHCR and partners in BiH are working to strengthen the capacities of legal practitioners from all sectors and future lawyers in refugee law, while advocating for a harmonized, adequately funded public free legal aid system, accessible to those forcibly displaced across the country. The current public legal aid system remains fragmented and under-resourced, leaving many asylum-seekers, refugees, and stateless persons without coverage or effective access. Building knowledge and expertise on asylum and international refugee law among legal professionals is therefore essential.

As part of these efforts, on 31 October in Sarajevo, UNHCR's legal partner Vaša Prava BiH organized a workshop to improve access to rights for people under international protection. The event gathered over 40 participants from key institutions, including the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, state and cantonal legal aid offices, UNHCR, and partners. The workshop focused on strengthening public legal aid capacities and fostering a broader expert network to respond more effectively to legal needs.

In parallel, on 20 October, UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Vaša Prava BiH and Law Faculties of four universities in BiH for the delivery of Refugee Law Clinics. This initiative aims to equip future lawyers with both theoretical knowledge and practical experience in international refugee law and BiH asylum legislation. The first clinic successfully took place in Mostar, gathering around 40 law students from the University of Mostar and the University of Džemal Bijedić. Students engaged directly with authorities and civil society partners, visited the Refugee Reception Centre Salakovac, and witnessed inspiring examples of resilience and integration – such as a visit to a pastry shop opened by a Palestinian refugee family. Other clinics are planned to take place in Tuzla and Bihać in November.

## UKRAINIANS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24/02/2022 AND ARE CURRENTLY IN BIH: 325

**23** people under subsidiary protection

**4** asylum-seekers waiting for interview or final decision

**298** people applied for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds, which permits stay up to six months but without rights (besides residency)

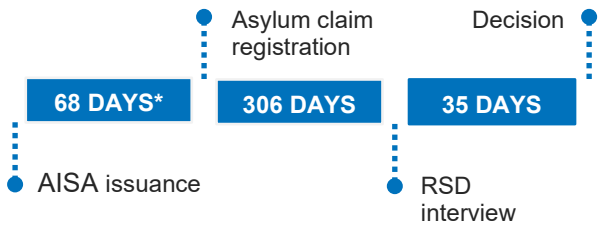
## ASYLUM OVERVIEW (2023 – 2025)

| | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Applications | 147 | 235 | 133 |
| Refugee status[2] | 4 | 2 | 5 |
| Subsidiary protection status[2] | 63 | 93 | 40 |
| Rejected applications[2] | 9 | 16 | 29 |
| Procedure terminated[2] | 41 | 33 | 81 |

*[2] Decisions not necessarily final and binding. Figures refer to the number of people covered by decisions.*

## AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME: 409 DAYS

Average time from AISA issuance to first-instance decision, for decisions issued during the last six months (29 cases).




** For the waiting time between AISA issuance and registration, detention cases are excluded, as UNHCR does not receive data to calculate it. However, they are included in the next two steps.*

## ASYLUM PROCESSING BACKLOG

**74 DAYS**

Average time between AISA issuance and registration, excluding detention cases. This time covers claims registered in the last six month (May – Oct. 2025). It has decreased by 10% compared with the previous six-month period, when it was averaging 82 days (Nov. 2024 – April 2025).

**358 DAYS**

60% of asylum-seekers (71 cases) pending RSD interview have been waiting for over six months (358 days in average). These cases should be processed timely. As per the Law on Asylum, waiting time from registration to decision should be up to six months, and exceptionally up to 18 months.

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN OCTOBER

*Data provided based on information available to date.*

- **198** people provided with legal information on asylum in BiH through individual and group counselling
- **79** people assisted with asylum-related free legal aid
- **124** people assisted with psychosocial support
- **15** sessions in social, recreational and occupational therapy activities
- **1** case of person at risk of statelessness resolved
- Vaša prava BiH intervened in cases where refugees faced barriers in accessing healthcare, social protection, or banking – noting fragmented administrative practices across the country. In parallel, with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and health institutions, UNHCR's psychosocial support partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative (BHWI) facilitated access to healthcare for 12 people. Combined legal and social support proved efficient in navigating complex procedures, ensuring access to rights, and reducing stress among beneficiaries.

*Refugee Law Clinic attended by law students from the University of Mostar and the University of Džemal Bijedi @UNHCR*

*Marking of Children's Week at the Asylum Centre Delijaš @UNHCR/BHWI*

## NEWS & EVENTS

- On 28 October in Sarajevo, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, in cooperation with UNHCR, organized a roundtable on access to social protection for people under international protection in BiH. The event brought together key institutions and civil society organizations providing services to people under international protection. Through discussions, sharing of good practices, and identification of challenges, participants developed recommendations that will inform proposed amendments to the Rulebook on social assistance for persons under international protection.
- Children's Week was marked throughout the country. Asylum-seeking and refugee children enrolled in regular primary schools joined classroom activities on promoting children's rights. For instance, two Syrian refugee children participated in an event organized by the Federal Ministry of Education in Ilidža. Additionally, UNHCR's partner BHWI held activities at the Asylum Centre Delijaš to foster children's rights and strengthen social and emotional skills.

## FUNDING UPDATE

Financial requirements: **USD 7.3 million**

UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2025 global programmes.

Australia | Belgium | Denmark | France | Germany | Ireland | Netherlands | Norway | Republic of Korea | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sweden | Switzerland

UNHCR is also grateful for the generous contributions from the private sector and individuals.

UNHCR BiH is grateful to the donors to its 2025 programme.

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