

Bosnia and Herzegovina

3,542 persons arrived irregularly in August, a decrease by 11% compared to the previous month (3,967). Top three declared countries of origin are Afghanistan (50%), Morocco (27%) and Iran (Islamic Republic of) (4%).*

2,477 asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants were accommodated in reception facilities at the end of August.

Out of total irregular arrivals in August, the Service for Foreigners' Affairs (SFA) issued an "Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum" (AISA) to **92%** of them (**3,272** persons).*

11 persons registered their asylum claims with the Sector for Asylum (6 cases with persons from the Russian Federation, Afghanistan, Sudan and Azerbaijan).

5 Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews were conducted.

8 decisions** (8 cases) were issued, 5 granting subsidiary protection (5 cases) and 3 negative (3 cases). 1 application was otherwise closed.

KEY POPULATION DATA AT THE END OF AUGUST

17 persons awaiting registration of their asylum claims with the assistance of UNHCR/Vaša prava BiH

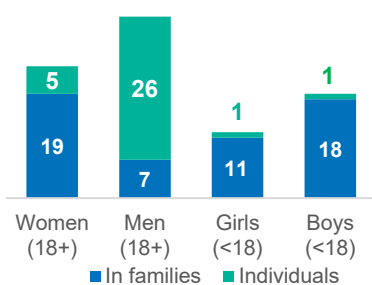
88 asylum-seekers pending processing and final decision

159 persons under international protection, of which **45** under refugee status and **114** under subsidiary protection

31 stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness

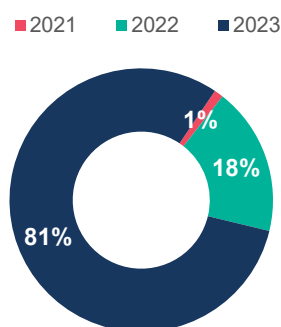
ASYLUM SEEKERS PENDING PROCESSING AND FINAL DECISION AT THE END OF AUGUST

AGE AND GENDER

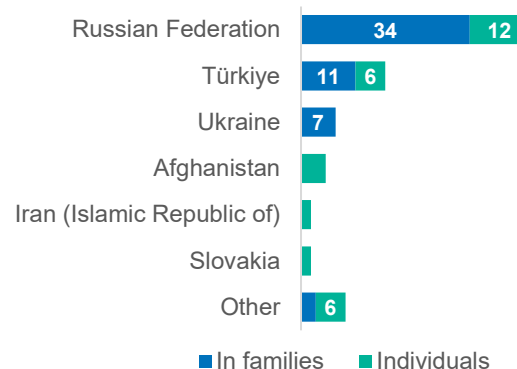


5 single adult females
31 children, among which **2** unaccompanied or separated children

PER YEAR OF REGISTRATION

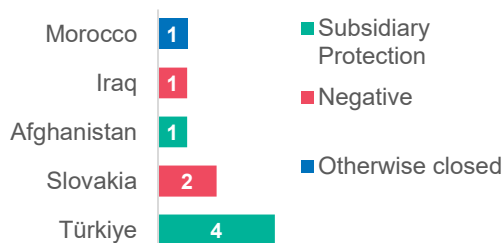


TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



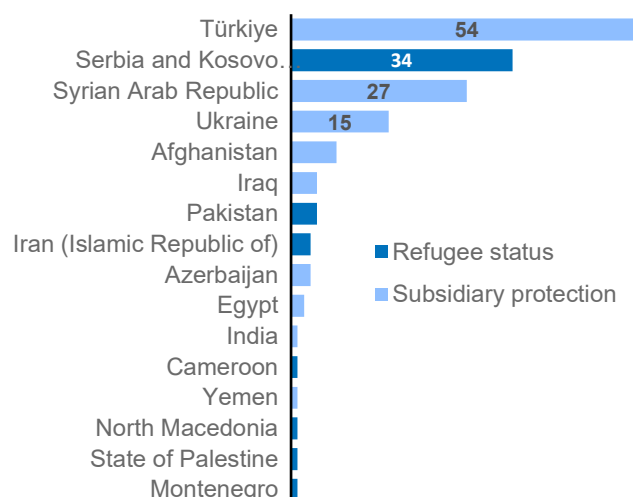
DECISIONS** IN AUGUST

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AT THE END OF AUGUST

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



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

** Decisions are not necessarily final and binding. Figures refer to the number of persons covered by decisions.

*** Average processing time (days) from asylum-claim registration to first-instance decision (at case level). Appealed decisions are not included.

**** Waiting time (days) between AISA issuance and asylum-claim registration (at case level), excluding registrations conducted in Immigration Centre or prison.

ACCESS TO ASYLUM

UNHCR advocates for effective access to the asylum procedure at any point in time and space for persons in need of international protection who wish to pursue asylum in BiH. This includes access to asylum from places of restriction of movement, such as the Immigration Centre. Late 2022, a Syrian unaccompanied minor was detained. UNHCR and UNICEF advocated for alternative care arrangements and UNHCR's partner Vaša prava BiH appealed the decision. In August 2023, the Constitutional Court of BiH stated in its decision that human rights had been violated. The decision highlighted that depriving of liberty an unaccompanied minor to guarantee deportation is not in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights, if the goal can be achieved by other, less coercive measures. UNHCR welcomes this decision and recalls that refugee and migrant children should not be detained. The best interest of the child should be a primary consideration in all measures affecting them.

On the same topic, UNHCR advocated for the removal from the 2015 Law on Aliens of a provision related to detention of children. However, the recently adopted Amendments to the Law on Foreigners did not address this issue. UNHCR also advocated for effective access to asylum, including at the borders, access of persons under international protection to permanent residence as well as for family reunification for persons under subsidiary protection.

UKRAINIAN NATIONALS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24 FEBRUARY 2022 STAYING IN BiH: 187 at the end of August

- 14** persons granted subsidiary protection
- 7** asylum-seekers waiting for interview or final decision
- 2** persons issued with an AISA
- 164** persons applied for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds, which allows to stay up to six months but without rights (besides residency)

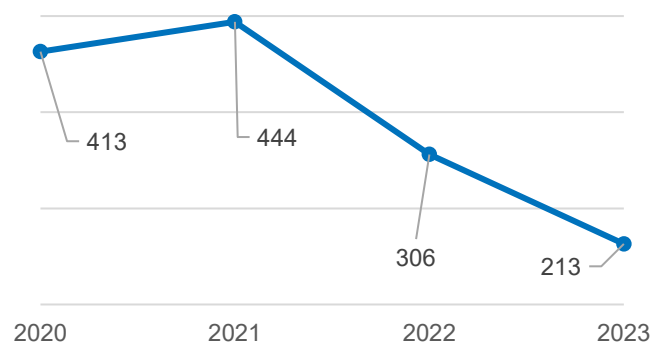
ASYLUM PROCESSING ACTIVITIES DURING 2020 – 2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023
<i>Applications</i>	245	167	149	88
<i>Refugee** status</i>	1	5	0	2
<i>Subsidiary protection** status</i>	31	28	46	29
<i>Rejected applications**</i>	54	49	26	12
<i>Otherwise closed**</i>	546	184	162	33

ASYLUM PROCEDURE TIMEFRAME at the end of August

- 43 days**
Average waiting time to register an asylum claim**** for those claims which were registered in 2023
- 183 days**
Average time (days) from registration of asylum claim to RSD interview, for RSD interviews held in 2023
- 213 days**
Average processing time*** for first-instance decisions issued in 2023

AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME*** 2020-2023 at the end of August



** Decisions are not necessarily final and binding.

*** Average processing time (days) from asylum-claim registration to first-instance decision (at case level). Appealed decisions are not included.

**** Waiting time (days) between AISA issuance and asylum-claim registration date (at case level), excluding registrations conducted in Immigration Centre or prison.

UPDATE ON ACHIEVEMENTS IN AUGUST

Data provided based on information available to date.

- **438** persons provided with information related to asylum in BiH
- **79** persons assisted with free legal aid related to asylum in BiH
- **2,369** persons assisted with psychosocial support
- **33** persons attended local language classes as part of their integration path
- **1** case of stateless and at risk of statelessness resolved
- **1** strategic / priority case of IDPs and returnees resolved
- Five persons under subsidiary protection started working for a retail company in Sarajevo. Each has a personal mentor to help them adapt during their first month to start a self-sufficient life.
- For the first time, information sessions on asylum in BiH were organized in the recently opened reception centre for minor asylum-seekers and unaccompanied vulnerable children located in Sarajevo. A total of 18 children from Afghanistan attended, who are in need of international protection, together with their legal guardians.



Workshop to discuss portrayal of refugees and migrants in film, during the Sarajevo Film Festival



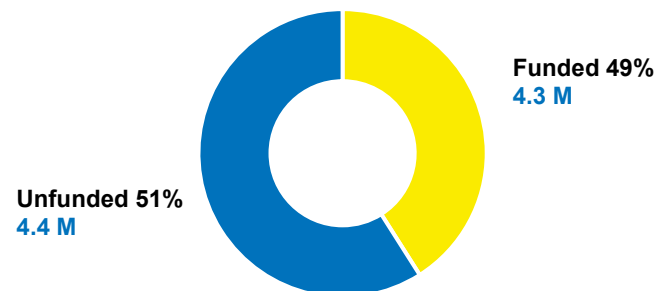
Displaced family member receiving the keys of their new apartment in Istočno Novo Sarajevo

NEWS & EVENTS

- As part of the Human Rights Day programme of the 29th Sarajevo Film Festival, UNHCR together with IOM held a [workshop with 30 European Youth Ambassadors](#) from the Western Balkan to discuss portrayal of refugees and migrants in film. Going through movies excerpts, it was mentioned that the role of cinema in shaping public opinions and educating people is very strong, and that in films, especially documentaries, it is crucial to present refugees as persons who flee their countries due to persecution or fear of persecution.
- In a heartwarming moment, 15 families of displaced persons and returnees in Istočno Novo Sarajevo have finally found a place to call home. Under the Regional Housing Programme, a new building has been built, solving the housing issue for these families. The [ceremonial key handover](#) took place on 17 August, symbolizing the start of a new chapter for these families.

FUNDING UPDATE

Financial requirements: **USD 8.7 million**



UNHCR BiH is grateful for the support of its 2023 donors: [European Union](#) | [United States of America](#)

To implement its 2023 programme, UNHCR cooperates with [government partners](#), the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, the Ministry of Security, and the Service for Foreigners' Affairs, as well as [NGO partners](#), the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative, the Catholic Relief Services and Vaša prava BiH.