

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

2,491 persons arrived irregularly in November, a decrease by 29% compared to the previous month.¹

Top three declared countries of origin are Afghanistan (33%), Morocco (24%) and the Syrian Arab Republic (13%). Among them, **88%** were issued an “Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum” (AISA).¹

The number of irregular arrivals so far in 2023 (**31,152**) is the highest ever recorded in a year by the BiH authorities, exceeding the 2019 peak (29,196).¹

2,144 asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants were accommodated in reception facilities at the end of November.

The Sector for Asylum of the Ministry of Security (MoS) registered the asylum claims of **16** persons and conducted **5** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews.

7 decisions were issued, 2 granting refugee status and 5 granting subsidiary protection. 2 applications were otherwise closed.²

SELECTED POPULATION DATA AT THE END OF NOVEMBER

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

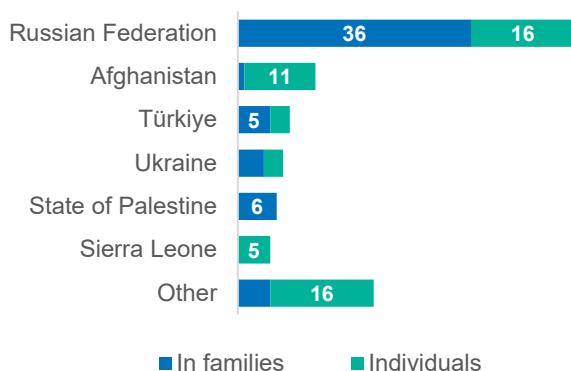
111 asylum-seekers with claims pending processing and final decision

171 persons under international protection, of whom **43** under refugee status and **128** under subsidiary protection

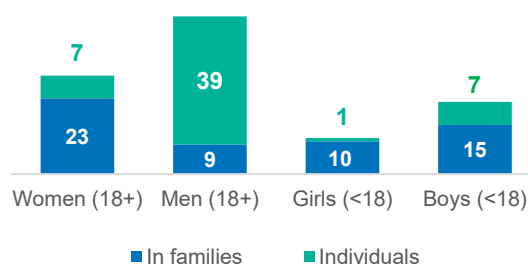
25 stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness

ASYLUM-SEEKERS AT THE END OF NOVEMBER

TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



AGE AND GENDER

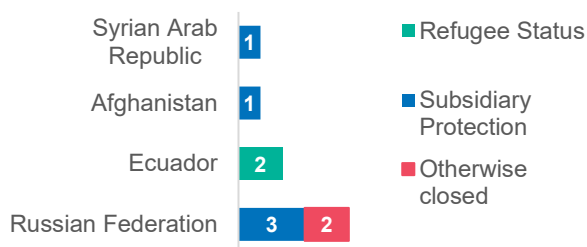


7 single adult females

33 children, among which **8** unaccompanied or separated children

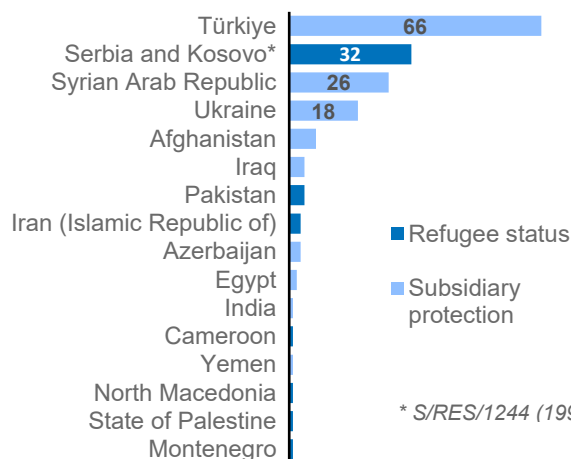
DECISIONS² IN NOVEMBER

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AT THE END OF NOVEMBER

TOP-FIFTEEN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



* S/RES/1244 (1999)

¹ Data based on weekly statistics from the Ministry of Security.
² Decisions not necessarily final and binding. Figures refer to the number of persons covered by decisions.

STRENGTHENING STATE-SPONSORED FREE LEGAL AID

On 9 November, UNHCR's legal partner Vaša prava BiH organized a roundtable on the provision of free legal assistance to persons under international protection in BiH. The event brought together 42 participants from government-run free legal aid offices at all levels, ministries of justice at state and entity levels, Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, BiH Ombudsmen and selected institutions in charge of health, social and work-related rights. Discussions focused on the challenges faced by persons under international protection in accessing rights, how to standardize and improve the legal framework, as well as its implementation in practice. As a result, a platform was created for further initiatives and cooperation between different government levels.

Indeed, the current governmental free legal aid system is unable to respond to the needs and there are gaps in terms of funding, staffing, expertise and interpretation. A harmonized and functional public free legal aid system is necessary to ensure effective access to justice for persons lacking financial means and other vulnerable groups on an equal basis across the country. Over the last 25 years, UNHCR has invested in developing the capacities of free legal aid providers from the civil society. In the context of transition to state-owned mixed migration management, UNHCR advocates for the strengthening of the authorities' capacities to grant quality free legal aid to asylum-seekers, persons under international protection and stateless persons throughout the country.

UKRAINIAN NATIONALS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24 FEBRUARY 2022 STAYING IN BiH: 206 at the end of November

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

ASYLUM PROCESSING ACTIVITIES FROM 2021 – 2023

	2021	2022	2023
Applications	167	149	138
Refugee status ²	5	0	4
Subsidiary protection status ²	28	46	58
Rejected applications ²	49	26	10
Otherwise closed ²	184	162	37

² Decisions not necessarily final and binding. Figures refer to the number of persons covered by decisions.

ASYLUM PROCEDURE TIMEFRAME at the end of November

42 days

Average waiting time between AISA issuance and asylum-claim registration date for those claims that were registered in 2023 (at case level), excluding registrations conducted in Immigration Centre or prison.

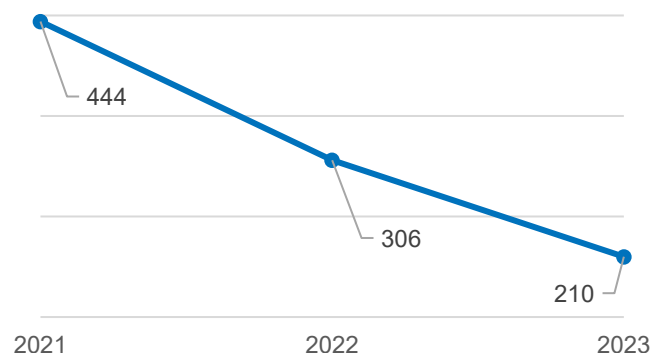
168 days

Average time from registration of asylum claim to RSD interview (at case level) - for RSD interviews held in 2023.

210 days

Average processing time from asylum-claim registration to first-instance decisions issued in 2023 (at case level).
 Appealed decisions are not included.

AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME 2020-2023 at the end of November



ACHIEVEMENTS IN NOVEMBER

Data provided based on information available to date.

- **273** persons provided with legal information on asylum in BiH through individual and group counselling
- **107** persons assisted with free legal aid in asylum-related cases
- **998** persons assisted with psychosocial support
- **49** persons attended local language classes as part of their integration path
- **2** cases of stateless and at risk of statelessness resolved
- UNHCR's partner Vaša prava BiH provided legal counselling to 15 persons from Palestine currently accommodated in the Salakovac Refugee Reception Centre, who expressed interest in starting the asylum procedure in BiH. These persons were recently evacuated from Gaza together with their BiH relatives. Nine others will be supported to record, confirm, or acquire BiH citizenship.
- Together with its partner the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), UNHCR supported, through grants, two persons under international protection who are starting their small businesses in Sarajevo – a clothing and a shoe store.



Legal counselling at the Salakovac Refugee Reception Centre with beneficiaries from Palestine @Vaša prava BiH



Person under international protection at her clothing store, which is supported through a small business grant @CRS

NEWS & EVENTS

- The **closing conference** of the Regional Housing Programme (RHP) was held in Sarajevo on 29 November, eleven years after the launch of the programme. The RHP, a joint initiative of BiH, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, delivered 11,300 housing units and provided secure homes to 36,000 most-vulnerable refugees and internally displaced persons (of whom 9,000 in BiH) following the conflicts in former Yugoslavia in the 1990s.
- Together with the Ministry of Security, UNHCR organized **three trainings for the Border Police**, the Service for Foreigners' Affairs and Centres for Social Welfare in Livno/Bosansko Grahovo on 16 November, in Banja Luka/Gradiška on 17 November, and in Bijeljina on 24 November, benefitting a total of 70 participants. The training focused on principles of the international refugee law, BiH asylum procedure and roles of different bodies in the national asylum system.

FUNDING UPDATE

Financial requirements: **USD 8.7 million**



UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2023 global programmes.

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

UNHCR BiH is grateful to the donors to its 2023 programme.

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