

# Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

**2,953** persons arrived irregularly in January, a decrease by 9% compared to the previous month.<sup>1</sup>

Top three declared countries of origin are the Syrian Arab Republic (47%), Afghanistan (15%) and Morocco (12%).<sup>1</sup>

**85%** of them were issued an “Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum” (AISA).<sup>1</sup>

**2,592** asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants were accommodated in reception facilities at the end of January.

The Sector for Asylum of the Ministry of Security (MoS) registered the asylum claims of **30** persons and conducted **3** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews.

**6** decisions were issued, all granting subsidiary protection. 2 applications were otherwise closed.<sup>2</sup>

## SELECTED POPULATION DATA AT THE END OF JANUARY

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

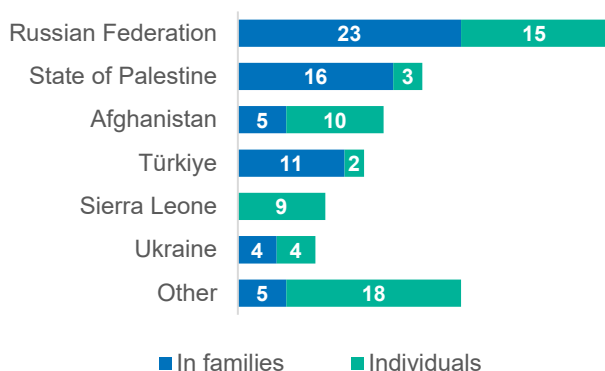
**125** asylum-seekers with claims pending processing and final decision

**186** persons under international protection, of whom **45** under refugee status and **141** under subsidiary protection

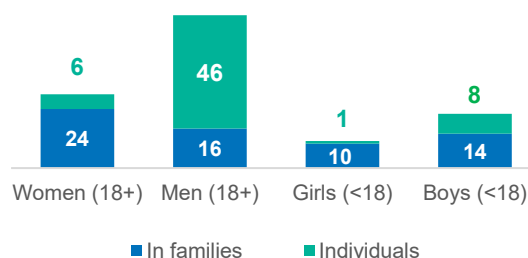
**22** stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness

## ASYLUM-SEEKERS AT THE END OF JANUARY

### TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



### AGE AND GENDER

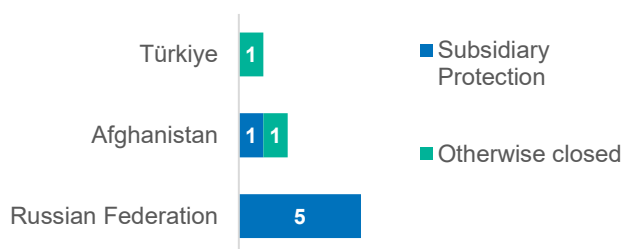


**6** single adult females

**33** children, among which **9** unaccompanied or separated children

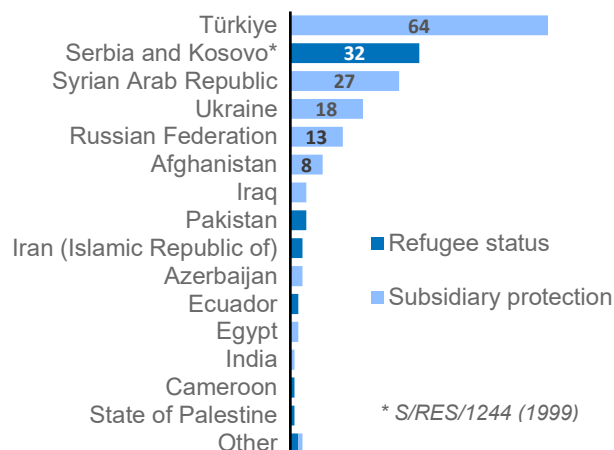
## DECISIONS<sup>2</sup> IN JANUARY

### PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



## PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AT THE END OF JANUARY

### TOP-FIFTEEN COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



\* S/RES/1244 (1999)

<sup>1</sup> Data based on weekly statistics from the Ministry of Security.

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

## ASYLUM CLAIMS ON THE RISE

Recent contextual developments contributed to an increase in asylum applications in BiH. This can be explained to some extent by the surge in the number of irregular arrivals of Syrian nationals to BiH in the last three months, as well as by evacuations of BiH citizens and their Palestinian relatives from Gaza to BiH. Thus, the number of cases presented to the UNHCR/and legal partner Vaša prava BiH (VP) Eligibility Committee rose in December and January, and so did the number of applicants represented by VP. This increased interest in seeking asylum in BiH also hints at improved provision of information to persons on the move, and better identification of persons in need of international protection.

In January, the number of registrations of asylum claims also increased, with 30 applications registered. Such a monthly result has not been reached since October 2021. UNHCR commends the efforts by the Ministry of Security to conduct timely registrations, and to prioritize applications of certain groups with genuine interest to seek asylum and need for international protection. However, access to the asylum procedure is still only possible upon invitation by the authorities which, in practice, happens beyond the validity delay of the “Attestation on Intention to Seek Asylum” (AISA) of 14 days. UNHCR advocates to leave the initiative to register their claim to asylum-seekers so that they have responsibility over their claim.

The number of registered asylum-seekers in BiH is now 125, meaning that their claim is pending processing and final decision. Such a high number of pending cases has not been reached for over a year, and will require the authorities to maintain the pace of successfully reducing processing times in 2023.

### UKRAINIAN NATIONALS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24 FEBRUARY 2022 STAYING IN BiH: 213 at the end of January

**17** persons granted subsidiary protection

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

**188** 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 2022 – 2024

	2022	2023	2024
Applications	149	147	30
Refugee status <sup>2</sup>	0	4	0
Subsidiary protection status <sup>2</sup>	46	63	6
Rejected applications <sup>2</sup>	26	11	0
Otherwise closed <sup>2</sup>	162	41	2

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

### ASYLUM PROCEDURE TIMEFRAME at the end of January

#### 68 days

Average waiting time between AISA issuance and asylum-claim registration, for claims registered in 2024 (at case level), excluding registrations conducted in Immigration Centre or prison. However, the AISA is only valid up to 14 days.

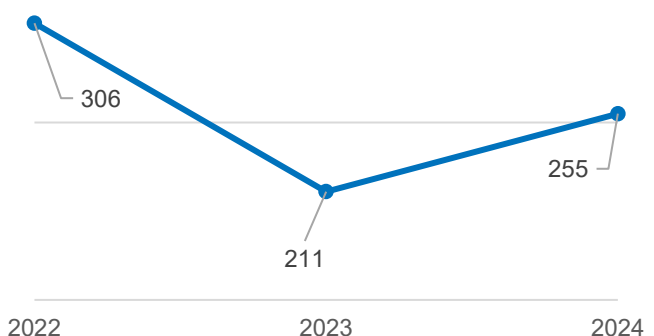
#### 77 days

Average time from registration of asylum claim to RSD interview (at case level), for RSD interviews held in 2024.

#### 255 days (over 8 months)

Average processing time from asylum-claim registration to first-instance decisions issued in 2024 (at case level). Appealed decisions are not included. Processing time as per the Law on Asylum should be up to 6 months, and exceptionally up to 18 months.

### AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME 2022-2024 at the end of January



## ACHIEVEMENTS IN JANUARY

*Data provided based on information available to date.*

- **380** persons provided with legal information on asylum in BiH through individual and group counselling
- **122** persons assisted with free legal aid in asylum-related cases
- **202** persons assisted with psychosocial support
- **75** social, recreational and occupational therapy sessions organized
- **3** persons benefitted from specialized GBV programmes
- 75 sessions of social, recreational and occupational therapy activities were organized this month, including sports and arts practice. Among the beneficiaries is a Ukrainian boy who is part of a dance group training for an upcoming state championship in March. Nurturing talent in exile fosters resilience and facilitates integration.
- UNHCR and its partner the Catholic Relief Services promote a comprehensive integration approach for persons under international protection in BiH. In January, three integration plans were developed. These plans are tailored programmes to equip refugees with the necessary skills and resources to integrate locally and achieve self-sufficiency.



Group social counselling session in TRC Blažuj @BHWI



Ukrainian refugee children, recently enrolled in the BiH education system, attending a school class @BHWI

## NEWS & EVENTS

- With a [human-interest story](#), UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative (BHWI) demonstrated the importance of cultural and educational activities for the integration of forcibly displaced people. A group of 42 asylum-seekers and refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq, the Russian Federation, Türkiye, and Ukraine visited the cultural-historical landmarks of the city of Fojnica to acquaint themselves with the rich heritage of BiH. Such activity also promotes social cohesion by strengthening bonds and understanding between cultures.
- With the start of the new school semester, UNHCR and its partners intensified their support for the inclusion of forcibly displaced children in the regular education system in BiH. In January, 10 Ukrainian refugee children started a new chapter of their lives, by enrolling in local schools in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton. UNHCR and BHWI visited one of the cooperating schools, where children were wholeheartedly embraced by the teachers, instructors, and their classmates. Read more [here](#).