

Bosnia and Herzegovina

5,010 persons arrived irregularly in October, a 27% increase compared to the previous month (3,953) and a 312% increase compared to October 2021 (1,217). It is the highest monthly figure recorded since October 2018. Top three declared countries of origin are Afghanistan (45%), Burundi (32%), and Cuba (4%).

The Service for Foreigners' Affairs (SFA) issued an "Attestation of Expressed Intent to Seek Asylum" (AISA) to **97%** of them (**4,854** persons).

Out of 4 scheduled (excluding postponed events), **3** asylum claims were registered with the Sector for Asylum (involving 2 Afghani and 1 person from Syria).

Out of 5 scheduled, **4** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews were conducted.

10 decisions* (7 cases) were issued, all of them granting subsidiary protection. 28 asylum applications were otherwise closed (23 cases, including one unaccompanied child (UASC)).

2,942 asylum-seekers and migrants were accommodated in reception facilities at the end of October, while between 300-900 persons are estimated to be squatting outside of formal accommodation, mostly in Una-Sana Canton.

Average waiting time*** for the 3 cases registered in October was **33** days.

POPULATION OF CONCERN AT THE END OF OCTOBER

12 people awaiting registration of their asylum claims with the assistance of UNHCR / Vaša Prava BiH

79 asylum-seekers pending processing and decision

146 persons under international protection, of which **45** under refugee status and **101** under subsidiary protection

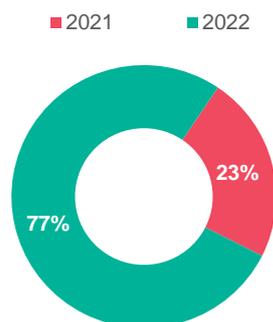
31 stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness

ASYLUM CLAIMS PENDING PROCESSING AND FINAL DECISION AT THE END OF OCTOBER: 79

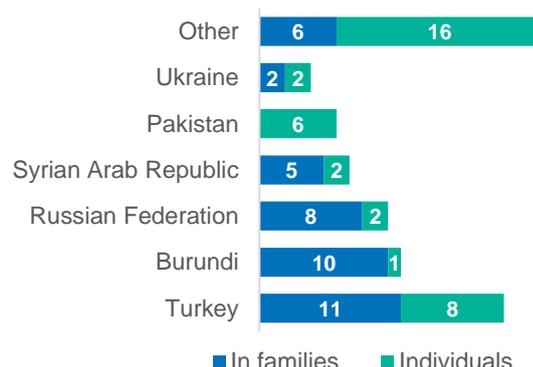
AGE AND GENDER



PER YEAR OF REGISTRATION



TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

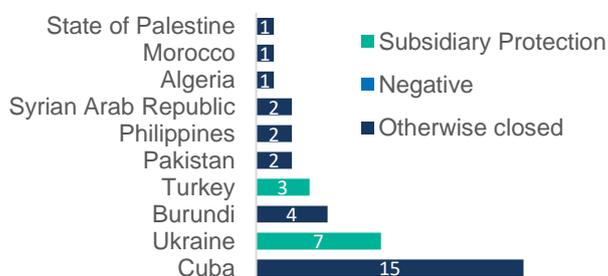


6 Single adult females

28 Children, among which **5** unaccompanied or separated children

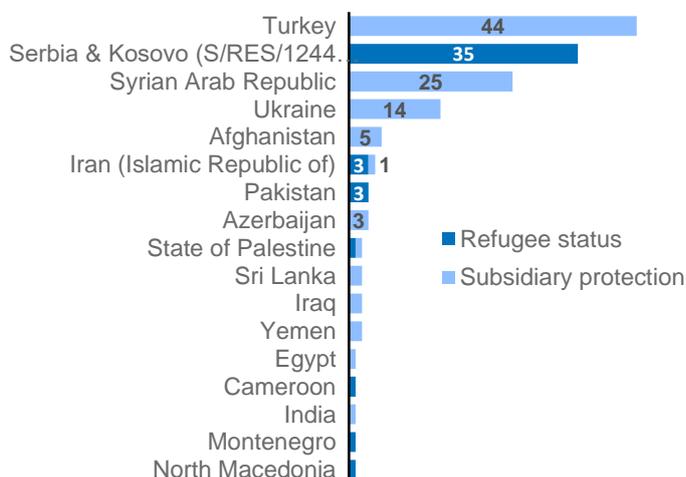
DECISIONS* IN OCTOBER 2022

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AT THE END OF OCTOBER

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN



* 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.

FOCUS ON BURUNDI

Since late May 2022, irregular arrivals from Burundi continued to increase, with a sharp rise in October. However, this trend may revert as on 21 October, the Serbian Government suspended its visa-free agreement with Burundi. It was already noted that between 31 October and 6 November, the number of declared arrivals from Burundi decreased by 80% compared to the previous week. So far in 2022, 15 Burundians registered an asylum claim in BiH. Within the EU, a surge in the number of asylum applications from Burundi was mostly observed in Belgium, from 35 in May to 550 in August according to [Eurostat](#).

IMPROVED ASYLUM PROCEDURE TIMEFRAME

The average waiting*** time to register an asylum claim in 2022 has significantly decreased in comparison to previous years, amounting to 70 days at the end of the month. This represents an important reduction compared to the waiting time for registrations conducted in 2020 (150 days) and in 2021 (181 days), and is a positive trend towards improving access to asylum in BiH.

In this regard, UNHCR advocates for asylum-seekers to be able to request registration of their asylum claims on their own initiative. Currently, access to the asylum procedure is only possible upon invitation by the authorities. Occasional long waiting times and unequal access, notably in respect of their residence, result in additional barriers for those in need of international protection and thus motivating those who may intend to apply for asylum in BiH to pursue onward movement.

A positive development is also noticed with a reduction in the average time to process asylum claims**, which was 444 days in 2021 and 298 days in 2022 so far. This considerable decrease is even more blatant for Ukrainian asylum-seekers, who received their decision on average 10 days after their RSD interviews. This is a very welcome development which shows an acceleration of the asylum procedure. It must however be noted that according to BiH law, the regular procedure should take a maximum of 6 months. At the end of October, there were 14 cases (involving 18 persons) awaiting their RSD interview for over 6 months, and thus a decision on their claims. UNHCR will continue to advocate for all asylum-seekers to receive a decision within a reasonable timeframe.

UKRAINIAN NATIONALS STAYING IN BiH: 130 at the end of October

- 10 persons granted subsidiary protection
- 4 asylum-seekers waiting for interview or final decision
- 0 persons with issued AISA
- 114 persons applied for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds, which allows to stay up to six months but without rights (besides residency)
- 2 persons staying on non-visa regime, which allows to stay for 30 days but without rights

ASYLUM PROCESSING ACTIVITIES DURING 2020 – 2022

	2020	2021	2022
Applications	245	167	123
Refugee* status	1	5	0
Subsidiary protection* status	31	28	39
Rejected applications*	54	49	22
Otherwise closed*	546	184	146

ASYLUM PROCEDURE TIMEFRAME at the end of October

70 days

Average waiting time to register an asylum claim*** for those claims which were registered in 2022

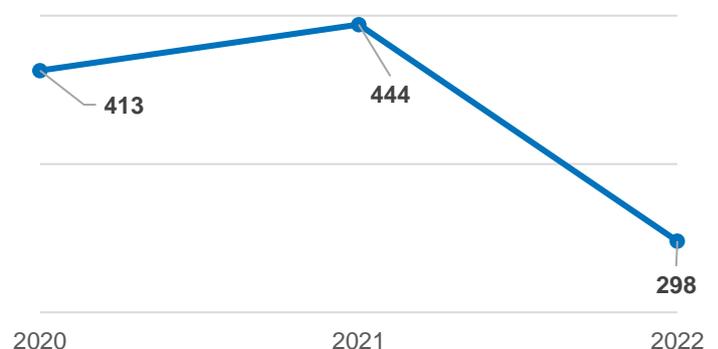
280 days

Average time (days) from registration of asylum claim to RSD interview, for RSD interviews held in 2022

298 days

Average processing time** for first-instance decisions issued in 2022

AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME** 2020-2022 at the end of October



* 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 OCTOBER 2022

- **1,154** persons provided with information on access to asylum in BiH
- **55** persons assisted with free legal aid on access to asylum in BiH
- **695** persons assisted with psychosocial support
- **17** attendants in educational and vocational trainings in support of the integration process
- **8** cases of stateless and at risk of statelessness resolved
- **3** strategic/priority cases of IDPs and returnees resolved
- All three asylum-claims registered by the MoS' Sector for Asylum in October were cases represented by UNHCR's partner Vaša Prava BiH.
- UNHCR, in cooperation with its partner the Catholic Relief Services and the Red Cross Society of BiH, concluded the first round of distribution of vouchers to support Ukrainian refugees in purchasing food and hygienic items.
- On 5 October, UNHCR, together with the OSCE and Vaša Prava BiH, held a seminar about hate crime to enhance capacities of UNHCR's field staff working in reception centres and Vaša Prava BiH lawyers to monitor hate crimes affecting asylum-seekers. A tool was subsequently developed to monitor hate incidents affecting asylum-seekers.



To celebrate the UN Day, UNHCR and UNICEF visited Ukrainian refugee children in Međugorje, 25 October



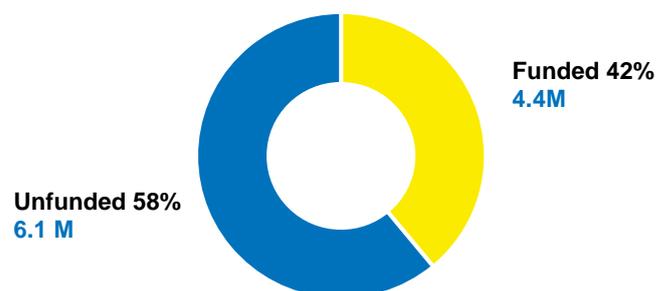
Focus Group Discussion organized in the Borići Temporary Reception Centre, 5 October

NEWS & EVENTS

- UNHCR contributed to the celebration of the UN Day in BiH by facilitating the performance of the awarded theatre play "Game" by the Mostar Youth Theatre in the Brčko Youth Centre on 24 October. The theatre play was created based on the testimonies of refugees who stayed in the Salakovac Refugee Reception Centre near Mostar. The play is the result of efforts to depict the life-stories of refugees with the aim of including them in the local community by promoting tolerance and cohesion.
- Also withing the UN Day celebration, UNHCR and UNICEF Representatives visited refugee children from Ukraine in Međugorje on 25 October. On this occasion and in cooperation with UNHCR's partner the foundation Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative, laptops and school equipment were donated. UNHCR also upgraded the IT cabinet of the Bijakovići Primary School in Međugorje for all pupils to use, with the aim of creating an inclusive environment and facilitate interaction among children from the local community and refugee children. [Read more.](#)

FUNDING UPDATE

Financial requirements: **USD 10.5 million**



UNHCR BiH is grateful for the support of its 2022 donors:
[United States of America](#) | [European Union](#) | [Austria](#)

To implement its 2022 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.