Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

The authorities reported **1,987** irregular arrivals in September, 46% more than in the previous month (1,362).[1]

Top three declared countries of origin are Egypt (28%), Afghanistan (18%) and Türkiye (9%).[1]

79% 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 **8** people and conducted **12** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews.

In September, **6** positive decisions were issued, granting subsidiary protection, and **5** negative decisions were issued. Six applications were suspended /terminated.[2]

SELECTED POPULATION DATA (END OF SEPTEMBER)

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

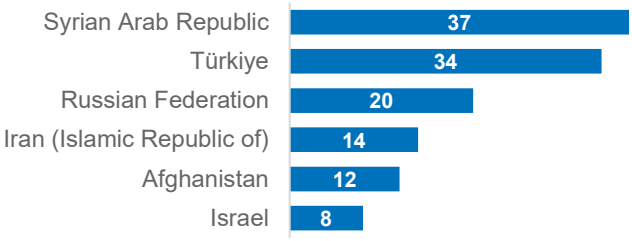
208 asylum-seekers with claims pending processing and final decision

272 people under international protection (**46** with refugee status and **226** under subsidiary protection)

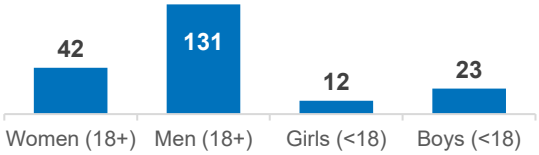
9 stateless people and people at risk of statelessness

ASYLUM-SEEKERS (END OF SEPTEMBER)

TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



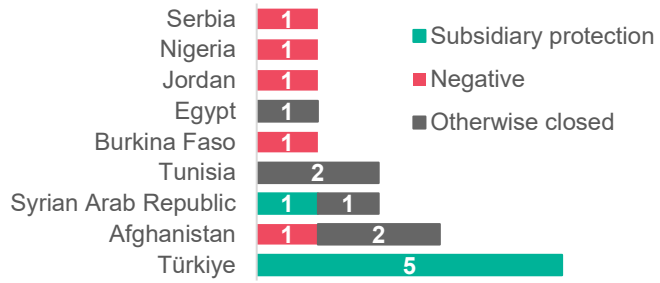
AGE AND GENDER



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

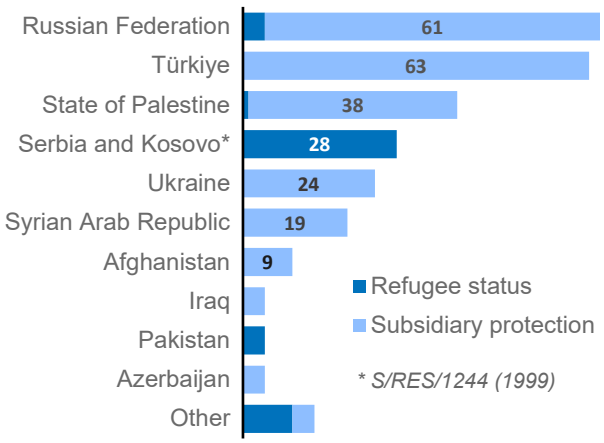
DECISIONS[2] IN SEPTEMBER

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



PEOPLE UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (END OF SEPTEMBER)[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 REFUGEE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING SIGNED IN SARAJEVO

On 24 September, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the Federal Employment Agency and the Employment Service of the Sarajevo Canton, in cooperation with UNHCR and its partner Catholic Relief Services. The MoU formalises inter-institutional cooperation aimed at facilitating access to employment for individuals under international protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Through this agreement, unemployed refugees will gain improved access to public employment programmes on an equal footing with BiH citizens. This means more opportunities to gain skills, find work, and contribute to their communities. Access to employment is a cornerstone of successful integration. It fosters independence and enables refugees to support themselves and their families. Employment also helps build connections with local communities and promotes social cohesion. The agreement reflects a shared commitment to work together and create long-term solutions that support refugee inclusion. It sets out clear roles and communication channels between institutions, and ensures that job-seeking refugees are informed about available employment services. By strengthening cooperation between key actors, this initiative helps build a more inclusive and sustainable support system – one that reduces dependence on international aid and empowers refugees to take control over their futures. The next step will be to monitor how the agreement is put into practice, making sure refugees receive coordinated support on their path to employment.

UKRAINIANS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24/02/2022 AND ARE CURRENTLY IN BIH: 321

23 people under subsidiary protection

3 asylum-seekers waiting for interview or final decision

1 person issued an AISA

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

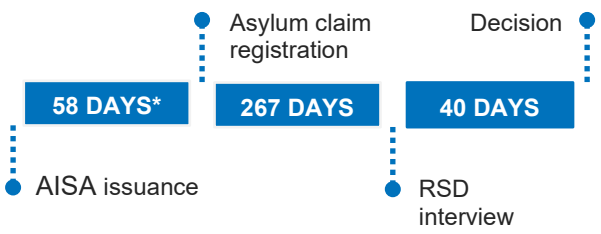
ASYLUM OVERVIEW (2023 – 2025)

	2023	2024	2025
Applications	147	235	111
Refugee status[2]	4	2	4
Subsidiary protection status[2]	63	93	35
Rejected applications[2]	9	16	21
Procedure terminated[2]	41	33	56

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

AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME: 365 DAYS

Average time from AISA issuance to first-instance decision, for decisions issued during the last six months (26 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

103 DAYS

Average time between AISA issuance and registration, excluding detention cases. This time covers claims registered in the last six month (April – Sept. 2025). It has increased by 84% compared with the previous six-month period, when it was averaging 56 days (Oct. 2024 – March 2025).

379 DAYS

63% of asylum-seekers (87 cases) pending RSD interview have been waiting for over six months (379 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 SEPTEMBER

Data provided based on information available to date.

- **179** people provided with legal information on asylum in BiH through individual and group counselling
- **57** people assisted with asylum-related free legal aid
- **121** people assisted with psychosocial support
- **4** sessions in social, recreational and occupational therapy activities

- On 18 September, a family under international protection opened a Palestinian pastry shop in Mostar, marking a milestone in their local integration journey. Supported by UNHCR and partners with free legal aid to open and register the company, a small business grant and psychosocial support, this initiative highlights how tailored support enables refugees to build sustainable livelihoods. Refugee-led businesses foster cultural exchange and strengthen community ties, showcasing the positive impact of inclusion and hospitality.

Matin, a refugee from Afghanistan, at work at a textile factory in Sarajevo @Vanja Cerimagic

A Palestinian refugee family opens a shop in Mostar @Herzegovina.info

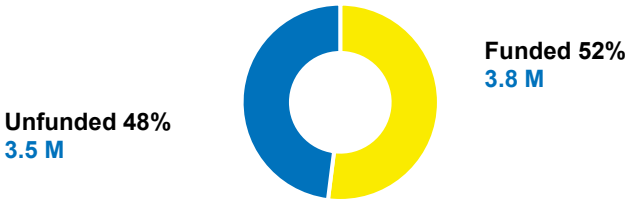
NEWS & EVENTS

- Meet Matin. At just 15, he fled Afghanistan to escape violence and seek safety. His journey took him through Iran, Türkiye, Greece, Albania, and Montenegro, until he reached BiH in 2023. With support from UNHCR, and its partner Catholic Relief Services, Matin now works at a textile factory in Sarajevo, holds a driver's license, and has a safe place to call home. His story is a powerful reminder of resilience and the importance of giving refugees the chance to rebuild their lives.

- On 23 September, UNHCR joined BiH authorities, the EU Delegation, Frontex, EUAA and IOM for the third National Steering Committee meeting of a regional programme to support protection-sensitive migration and asylum management across the Western Balkans. UNHCR appreciates the continued partnership with the EU, BiH authorities, and other partners, marking over a decade of joint progress.

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.

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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 2025 programme.

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