

# Bosnia and Herzegovina

**2,893** persons arrived irregularly in May, an increase by 40% compared to the previous month (2,065). Top three declared countries of origin are Afghanistan (39%), Morocco (17%) and Bangladesh (11%).\*

**1,136** asylum-seekers and migrants were accommodated in reception facilities at the end of May, while some 200 persons are estimated to be outside of formal accommodation.

Out of total irregular arrivals in May, the Service for Foreigners' Affairs (SFA) issued an "Attestation of Expressed Intent to Seek Asylum" (AISA) to **95%** of them (**2,741** persons).\*

**11** persons registered their asylum claims with the Sector for Asylum (7 cases with persons from Türkiye, Ukraine, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Egypt).

**7** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews were conducted.

**5** decisions\*\* (5 cases involving 5 persons) were issued, 1 granting refugee status, 3 granting subsidiary protection and 1 negative. 2 applications were otherwise closed (2 cases involving 2 individuals).

## KEY POPULATION DATA AT THE END OF MAY

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

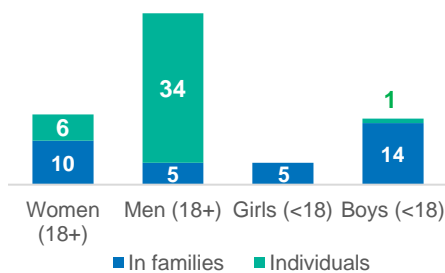
**75** asylum-seekers pending processing and final decision

**158** persons under international protection, of which **46** under refugee status and **112** under subsidiary protection

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

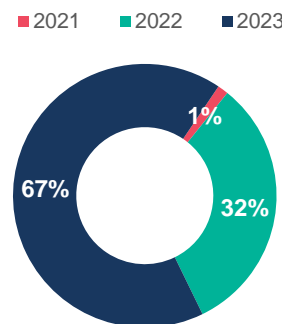
## ASYLUM SEEKERS PENDING PROCESSING AND FINAL DECISION AT THE END OF MAY

AGE AND GENDER

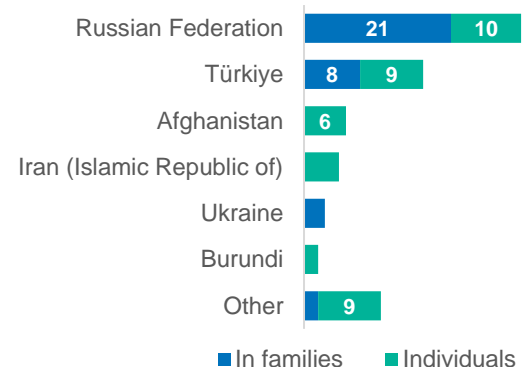


**6** single adult females  
**20** children, among which **1** unaccompanied or separated child

PER YEAR OF REGISTRATION

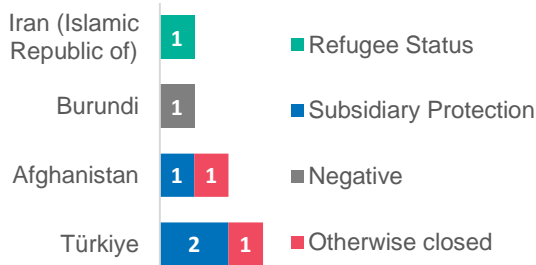


TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



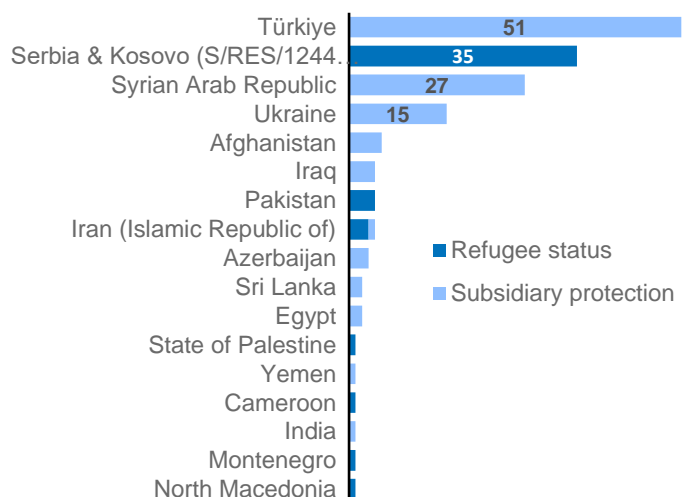
## DECISIONS\*\* IN MAY

### PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



## PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION AT THE END OF MAY

### 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.

## AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW ON ASYLUM

UNHCR welcomes the efforts of the BiH Ministry of Security to initiate the process of amending the Law on Asylum, dating from February 2016. The revision of the law constitutes an opportunity to improve the asylum system in BiH and to ensure comprehensive integration for those in need of international protection.

UNHCR advocates for the inclusion of provisions to improve integration of persons granted subsidiary protection in the country. Under the current legal framework, individuals with subsidiary protection status in BiH are not entitled to family reunification, travel documents, permanent residency and ultimately naturalization, regardless of how long they remain with this status. As a result, many remain in an indefinite precarious position, requiring the regular review and renewal of the status, which inhibits their ability to integrate fully in BiH and to plan their future.

On 30 May 2023, the BiH Ministry of Security organized a preparatory roundtable with support from UNHCR and its legal partner Vaša prava BiH. UNHCR presented its advocacy points and the Ministry of Security presented their plans to consider introduction of travel documents and family reunification for persons granted subsidiary protection, as well as facilitating access to labor market for asylum-seekers. UNHCR warmly commends these efforts, that would contribute to the realization of BiH's 2019 pledges given at the first Global Refugee Forum.

### UKRAINIAN NATIONALS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24 FEBRUARY 2022 STAYING IN BiH: 175 at the end of May

- 14** persons granted subsidiary protection
- 3** asylum-seekers waiting for interview or final decision
- 1** person issued with an AISA
- 155** 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

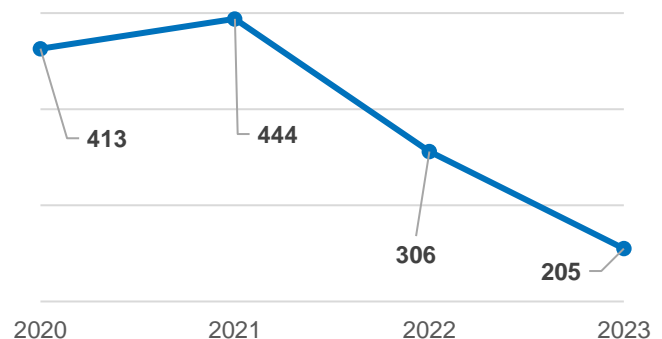
### ASYLUM PROCEDURE TIMEFRAME at the end of May

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

### ASYLUM PROCESSING ACTIVITIES DURING 2020 – 2023

	2020	2021	2022	2023
<i>Applications</i>	245	167	149	59
<i>Refugee** status</i>	1	5	0	2
<i>Subsidiary protection** status</i>	31	28	46	21
<i>Rejected applications**</i>	54	49	26	8
<i>Otherwise closed**</i>	546	184	162	26

### AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME\*\*\* 2020-2023 at the end of May



\*\* 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 MAY

- Some **400** persons were provided with information related to asylum in BiH
- Some **40** persons were assisted with free legal aid related to asylum in BiH
- More than **600** persons were assisted with psychosocial support
- 26** persons attended local language courses
- 2** strategic / priority case of IDPs and returnees resolved
- Integration plans were developed for two households, which are holistic integration programmes for persons under international protection. In addition, three persons under international protection were assisted in their socio-economic inclusion (identification and assessment of potential employers, accompaniment to job interviews, etc.). They all signed work agreements during the month.
- A focus group discussion related to the prevention of and response to Gender-based Violence (GBV) was organized in Temporary Reception Centre Ušivak. Topic was the importance of recognizing GBV in the community, attended by four persons from Iran and Afghanistan.



Person under international protection undergoing a job interview with a potential employer



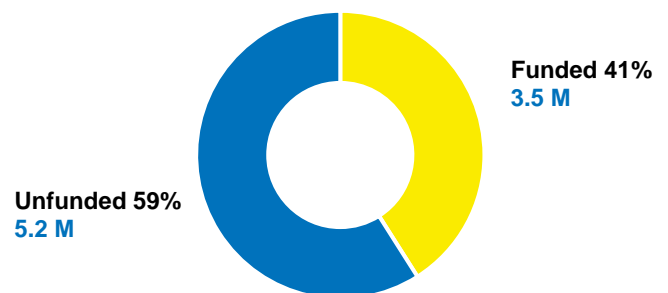
Joint Ministry of Security – UNHCR training for the Border Police, the SFA and Centres for Social Welfare to improve access to asylum for persons in need of international protection, Sarajevo

## NEWS & EVENTS

- UNHCR, together with the BiH Ministry of Security, initiated a [series of trainings](#) for the Border Police, the SFA and Centres for Social Welfare to improve access to asylum for persons in need of international protection. The session covers basics of international refugee law and the procedure that asylum-seekers go through in BiH. In May, trainings were held in Sarajevo and Višegrad, while additional sessions will take place in other locations this year.
- To strengthen social cohesion between the refugee and host communities in BiH, a sightseeing tour of Sarajevo was organized. More than 50 persons in need of protection from Türkiye, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Ecuador, Burundi and Iran participated, together with UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative and cultural mediators.

## 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.