



UPDATE

March/April 2024

Above: UNHCR Stage at Belgrade Marathon, @UNHCR, 28 April 2024

KEY FIGURES

More details: UNHCR Operational Data Portal [Southeastern Europe Situation](#).



6,589

New arrivals in governmental centres in Jan-Apr 2024¹



613

Persons accommodated in governmental centres



86

Applications for asylum in Jan-Apr 2024

1

Positive decision by the Asylum Office in Jan-Apr 2024

1,605

Persons fleeing Ukraine received Temporary Protection (TP) in Serbia since 24 Feb 2022, incl. **49** in Mar-Apr 2024

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UNHCR Serbia is grateful for the excellent cooperation of five partners under Project Partnership Agreements in 2024:



CRISIS
RESPONSE
AND POLICY
CENTRE

INDIGO



DEAS

Centar za
istraživanje i
razvoj društva



¹ Sources: SCRM (arrivals & presence); Ministry of Interior (asylum)



Signing of the Letter on cooperation of SCRM and UNHCR, ©SCRM, April 2024



Refugee runners at Belgrade Marathon, @UNHCR, April 2024

Highlights

- **First Convention Travel Documents (CTD) and permanent residences:** As the relevant changes to the Law on Foreigners and bylaws on Convention Travel Document (CTD) came into effect, the efforts of UNHCR's former and current partners resulted in important landmarks: a refugee from Burundi received permanent residence and 31 refugees have applied for the CTD with support of UNHCR. The first ever convention travel document (refugee passport) issued in Serbia was given to a refugee originating from Kazakhstan in March.
- **UNHCR and Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration Further Their Cooperation:** On 3 April, the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Nataša Milosavljević and the UNHCR Representative Soufiane Adjali signed a Letter of Understanding (LoU) on strengthening long-standing cooperation and coordination of activities related to asylum-seekers, refugees and IDPs in Serbia.
- **Serbia extends TP for Persons Fleeing Ukraine for a Year:** On 15 March, the Serbian Government published the Decision (*Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia* No. 21/2024) to Extend Temporary Protection in the Republic of Serbia to Displaced Persons Coming from Ukraine for another year, till 18 March 2025, after which period it can be extended for as long as necessary, i.e., for as long as there are reasons for temporary protection.
- **Vranje AC Marks Two Years' Hosting Refugees from Ukraine:** On 9 April, an [event was held in Vranje to mark the local asylum centre's two years of hosting refugees fleeing Ukraine](#). The event was organised by the SCRM and attended by the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Nataša Stanisavljević, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Serbia Volodymyr Tolkach, UNHCR Representative Soufiane Adjali, the Mayor of Vranje dr Slobodan Milenković, and the Deputy EU Ambassador to Serbia Plamena Halacheva.

Cooperation with Academia

- **Forced Displacement and Cultural Competencies:** In the period 5-12 March, UNHCR, its partner Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC), and the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) gave a set of lectures on "Forced Displacement and Cultural Competencies" for students of the Social Work Department at the Faculty of Philosophy in University of Novi Sad. The lectures included topics of trends in forced displacement, cultural diversity, country of origin information, and harmful practices, as well as the possibilities of internships with civil society organizations working in forced displacement.
- **UNHCR and Novi Sad Law Faculty Open Up Refugee Law Clinic:** On 27 March, UNHCR and the Law Faculty of the University of Novi Sad inaugurated this year's Refugee Law Clinic, under the project "EU Regional Support to Protection-Sensitive Migration Management Systems in the Western Balkans". This new generation of Law Clinic students will become acquainted with the current situation of forcibly displaced people in Serbia and in the world, with the history and the mandate of UNHCR, and get to know in person some of the refugees in Serbia.
- **Cultural Mediation Course at Faculty of Philology:** On 6 April 6, UNHCR and CRPC inaugurated the third annual Cultural Mediation course at the Faculty of Philology of University in Belgrade. Over 40 students enrolled in the course, joining the 97 who have already graduated. The course teaches of bridging cultural gaps through interpretation. Twelve most successful course participants will be offered paid internships with CRPC, where they will engage in field work with refugees and asylum-seekers.

Integration

- **Entrepreneurship Training:** In the scope of partnership with the UNHCR, the National Employment Service delivered an entrepreneurship training on 18 April titled "The Road to a Successful Entrepreneur" for refugees from Afghanistan, Burundi, Iran, South Sudan, Syria and Ukraine, who either have established businesses or business ideas. They learned about what it takes to become an entrepreneur in Serbia, including the administrative procedures and creation of a business plan.
- **#ForRefugees Network:** UNHCR Serbia welcomed two new members into the #ForRefugees network of socially-responsible companies, founded in June 2023 in cooperation with IKEA – the [Infostud](#) Centre for employment and career development and the [Irish-Serbian Chamber of Commerce](#). These companies will boost the UNHCR efforts on the training and employment of refugees and asylum-seekers, as part of the Network which now numbers 11 members, including three foreign chambers of commerce.

#IBelong – reducing the risk of statelessness

- **An information session for the Roma community and media** was organized within the #IBelong campaign, as part of the activities under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at eradicating statelessness in Serbia. This session was a collaborative effort of the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, the Ombudsman, the UNHCR, and the City of Kruševac local authorities. The session took place in Kruševac on April 18 and reached 20 members of the local community. The main objective was to educate Roma community representatives on how to exercise their right to registration in the birth register and to obtain personal documents.

Communication & Partnerships

- **"Culinary Bridges"**: On 5 March, the first event "Culinary Bridges", a re-brand of the traditional UNHCR Delicacy Monday, was held in Belgrade at the GRAD Cultural Centre. Visitors enjoyed a combination of dishes from Syria and Serbia, seasoned with the special skills of refugees from Syria and talented students of the Hospitality and Tourism School from Belgrade, and immersed themselves in the world of art through works created by artists from Afghanistan and Ukraine. More than 100 guests attended the event, including members of the diplomatic corps, and more than 30 refugees and asylum-seekers from Afghanistan, Burundi, Congo, Iran, Russia, Syria, and Ukraine.
- **Belgrade International Model UN**: On 14 March, Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić and the Heads of UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, and UNICEF agencies in Serbia opened up the 21st Belgrade International Model United Nations (BIMUN), whose theme "Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow" has never been more relevant. UNHCR Representative addressed the participants on the topic of "Access of refugees to the labour market and financial services", and UNHCR facilitated participation of a refugee originating from Afghanistan who shared his experience in economic inclusion with the Model UN contestants.
- **Refugees exhibit art and crafts at Easter Bazaar patroned by HRH Crown Princess Katherine**: On 22-23 March, UNHCR and CRPC enabled six exhibitors from amongst the non-Yugoslav refugee population in Serbia to exhibit in the Easter Bazaar of Art and Handiworks organised by HRH Crown Princess Katherine of Serbia Foundation. Refugees from Afghanistan, Russia, Syria, and Ukraine presented their handicrafts, jewellery, paintings, and sculptures, raised their profile, and made a modest income.
- **Refugees and UNHCR at Belgrade Marathon 2024**: 28 April 2024 marked the third anniversary of the [cooperation of UNHCR and Belgrade Marathon Ltd.](#), formalized in an MoU signed in 2022, aiming at inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers through sport. A refugee team of 13 runners from Burundi, Congo, Russia and Ukraine, joined the races in this year's Marathon, which attracted over 13,000 people from 72 countries. The UNHCR music stage in the Marathon featured performances by talented refugees and children belonging to the Music Art Project (MAP). The Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration and her team, along with the students and teachers of L'école française de Belgrade, joined in this celebration of diversity and inclusion. A team of ten Serbian runners supported the [#WithRefugees](#) campaign and ran in the marathon with UNHCR bracelets and T-Shirts.



UNHCR is grateful for contributions directly to Serbia operation, as well as for the support from donors of unearmarked, softly earmarked, and earmarked funding.