Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)

930 people have been reported to arrive irregularly in May, indicating a relatively stable trend compared to the preceding month (853).[1]

Top three declared countries of origin are Afghanistan (25%), Egypt (15%) and Morocco (13%).[1]

81% were issued an "attestation of the expressed intent to apply for asylum" (AISA).[1]

The Sector for Asylum of the Ministry of Security (MoS) registered the asylum claims of **9** people and conducted **4** Refugee Status Determination (RSD) interviews.

1 positive decision was issued, granting subsidiary protection, and **1** negative decision was issued. 6 applications were suspended/terminated.[2]

SELECTED POPULATION DATA (END OF MAY)

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

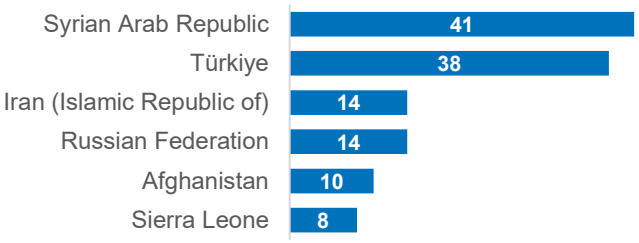
197 asylum-seekers with claims pending processing and final decision

271 people under international protection (**48** with refugee status and **223** under subsidiary protection)

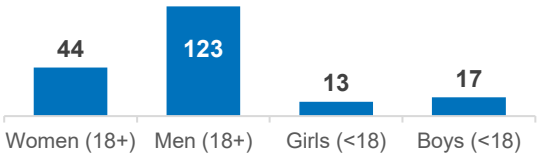
9 stateless people and people at risk of statelessness

ASYLUM-SEEKERS (END OF MAY)

TOP-SIX COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN



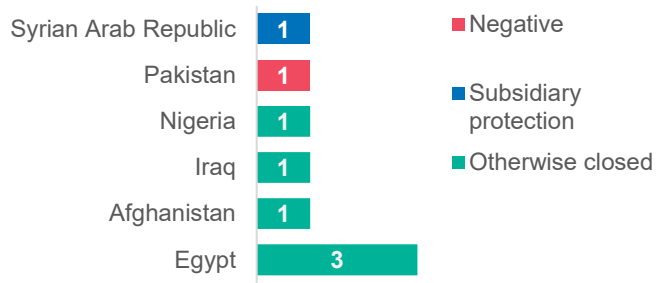
AGE AND GENDER



Of **30** children, **11** were unaccompanied or separated at the time of registration

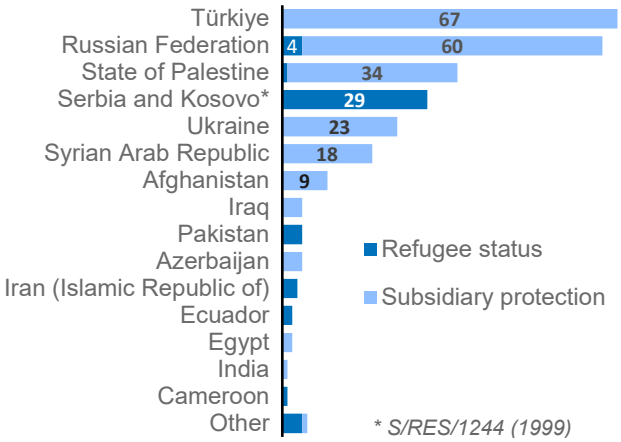
DECISIONS[2] IN MAY

PER COUNTRY OF ORIGIN (ALL INSTANCES)



PEOPLE UNDER INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION (END OF MAY)[2]

TOP-15 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.

ASYLUM PROCEDURE AND APPEAL MECHANISM IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In BiH, the Sector for Asylum of the Ministry of Security serves as the first-instance body in the asylum procedure. This authority is responsible for registering asylum applications, conducting refugee status determination (RSD) interviews, and issuing decisions. Asylum-seekers have the right to appeal these decisions with the Court of BiH within 15 days under the regular procedure. For example, at the end of May, there were 10 pending cases in appeal filed by UNCHR's legal NGO partner Vaša prava BiH.

The appeal procedure should include a hearing of the applicant by a judge, who can decide on the merits of the asylum claim. However, in practice, the Court rarely holds oral hearings, opting instead for written procedures. This approach limits the ability of asylum-seekers to clarify inconsistencies, address misunderstandings or provide missing information, which can be crucial for fair adjudication. Moreover, although the Court of BiH has the legal competence as second-instance body to make a judgment on the merits of asylum claims, it returns cases to the first-instance body for reconsideration. The Sector for Asylum is then responsible for issuing a new decision. This practice prolongs the asylum process and places additional burdens on both the authorities and applicants. If the Court were to exercise its full authority and decide cases on their merits, it would reduce administrative workload and enhance the efficiency and quality of the asylum procedure in BiH.

UKRAINIANS WHO ARRIVED AFTER 24/02/2022 AND ARE CURRENTLY IN BIH: 293

22 people under subsidiary protection

4 asylum-seekers waiting for interview or final decision

267 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	234	59
Refugee status[2]	4	2	4
Subsidiary protection status[2]	63	93	25
Rejected applications[2]	9	16	4
Procedure terminated[2]	41	33	34

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

AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME: 275 DAYS

Average time from AISA issuance to first-instance decision, for decisions issued during the last six months (24 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 waiting time between AISA issuance and registration, excluding detention cases. This waiting time covers claims registered in the last six month (Dec. 2024 – May 2025). It has increased by 58% compared with the previous six-month period, when it was averaging 65 days (Jun. – Nov. 2024).

341 DAYS

68% of asylum-seekers (91 cases) pending RSD interview have been waiting for more than six months (341 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 MAY

Data provided based on information available to date.

- **146** people provided with legal information on asylum in BiH through individual and group counselling
- **49** people assisted with free legal aid on asylum
- **151** people assisted with psychosocial support
- **12** sessions in social, recreational and occupational therapy activities

- In May, Vaša prava BiH provided free legal aid to 49 asylum-seekers and refugees. Efforts were invested in supporting the local integration of people under international protection, including interventions to upgrade their legal status. For example, naturalization requests were submitted for five refugees to obtain BiH citizenship. VP BiH also submitted requests for status review for two people under subsidiary protection from Afghanistan, advocating for refugee status based on new personal information.

Performance of the play "I Want to Live" in Mostar @Pozorište lutaka Mostar

Iranian refugee couple celebrating Nowruz in their new home in Sarajevo @Vaša prava BiH

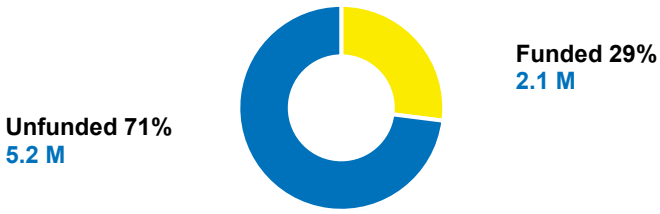
NEWS & EVENTS

- Learn more about the story of an Iranian refugee couple who met in Sarajevo, finding love and safety in the country. In a small apartment filled with the scents of Persian and Balkan dishes, they rebuilt their lives together and are planning their wedding. With support from UNHCR and its legal partner Vaša prava BiH, they acquired subsidiary protection status, are consuming their rights and are successfully integrating into their new host society.

- On 15 May, a performance of the play "I Want to Live" was staged at the Puppet Theatre in Mostar, with support from UNHCR's partner the Bosnia and Herzegovina Women's Initiative. The play, which is inspired by real-life stories, empowered refugee women to speak out on stage about their experiences as victims of violence and to amplify the voices of those who are unable to speak for themselves. Forcibly displaced people from Ukraine and Lebanon, who were among the audience, expressed appreciation for the empowering messages conveyed.

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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