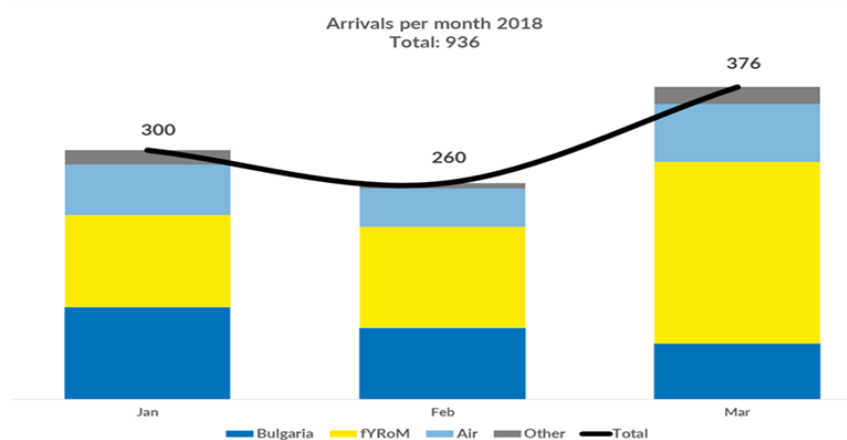


UNHCR SERBIA UPDATE

- On 22 March, the Serbian Parliament adopted a new **Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection**, as well as new laws on Foreigners and on the Protection of State Borders. All three new laws will be relevant for managing the refugee and migration situation. The new Asylum Law, for example, aligns Serbian legislation to international and EU standards by including an improved refugee definition and enhanced provisions for unaccompanied and separated asylum-seeking children. It will take effect 8 days after its publication in the Official Gazette on 26 March, where-after authorities shall prepare its implementation for another 60 days.
- 3,866** new refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants were counted in Serbia on 01 April. **3,481** (i.e. 90%) were accommodated in 18 governmental centres, while – with milder weather - close to **400** were observed sleeping rough: around 180 in Belgrade City, and some 200 close to the borders to Croatia or Hungary.
- UNHCR and partners assisted **186 new arrivals** (compared to 194 the preceding two weeks). 54% arrived from fYRoM, 25% from Bulgaria and 11% by air. Most were from Pakistan (38%), followed by Iraq (20%), Afghanistan (19%), and Iran (15%). 61% were adult men, 8% adult women and 30% children, including 25 unaccompanied or separated children (UASC). Altogether **714** foreigners registered intention to seek asylum in Serbia during March. Below chart refers for observed arrival trends in 2018.



- Hungary admitted 14 asylum-seekers into procedures in its so-called “transit-zones” (compared to 21 during the preceding two weeks). UNHCR and partners thus observed both increased psycho-social needs in centres as well as departures from centers to try irregular entry into neighbouring states, including even repeated attempts by families and into Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Accordingly, UNHCR and partners received more reports of **collective expulsions**, including of 109 asylum-seekers from Croatia (compared to 111 the preceding two weeks), 46 from Hungary (compared to 4 the preceding two weeks) and 5 from Romania (compared to 28 the preceding two weeks).
- On 29 March, under the 5th subproject of the **Regional Housing Programme**, 20 refugee families from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia received family houses in Becej municipality of Northern Serbia.



Refugee women from Adasevci TC displaying their handmade products at a fair in Novi Sad

- On 22 March, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MOLESVA), UNHCR Serbia and “Amity” signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on “Support to the Local Integration of Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees from the Former Yugoslavia”. The MOU will support access of vulnerable refugees and IDPs to the social protection system of ten key municipalities during 2018.
- UNHCR and MOLSEVA also intensified their cooperation under our MOU of October of last year to provide UASC, who had reported abuse in asylum-centres, with safer alternative accommodation.
- 95% of refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children of compulsory school age continued attending local primary schools. The enrolment of children of 15 years and older, however, remained limited.
- The February Update of our [Joint Assessment of Government Centres](#) refers for more information on reception standards.
- On 21 March, refugees, authorities and NGOs organised events across the country celebrating Persian New Year.
- On 23 March, UNHCR, the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and the Novosadski Humanitarni Centar (NSHC) organized a stand in Novi Sad fair “Novosadsko Prolece” where refugee women from Transit Centre Adasevci sold handmade jewellery.