

UNHCR SERBIA UPDATE

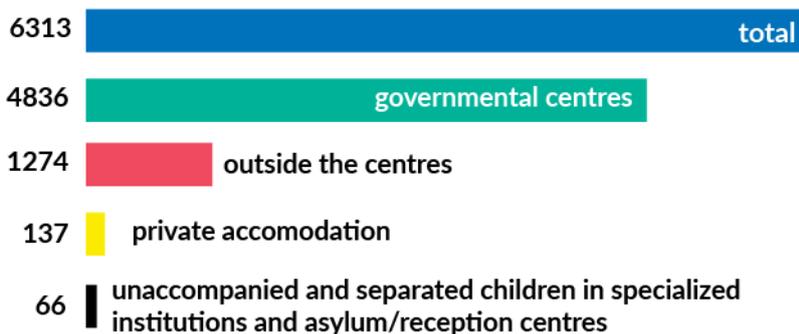
As of the end of June, **6,313 refugees and migrants are in the territory of Serbia**, of whom 4,836 were accommodated in 14 operational governmental centres across the country. 137 refugees and asylum seekers live in private accommodation. 19 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) are accommodated in specialised institutions, and 47 in asylum/reception centres.

10,039 newcomers to governmental centres were registered in June, representing an increase compared to 7,247 in May.

303 pushbacks from the neighbouring countries to Serbia (46% from Hungary, 50% from Romania, and 4% from Croatia) were registered in June (as compared to 384 in May). **Nationals of Syria make 49% of all the pushbacks, Pakistanis make 26%, and Afghans come third with 7%** of all pushbacks.

In June, **the Asylum Office (AO) of the Ministry of Interior (Moi) of Serbia** granted subsidiary protection to three nationals of Ukraine, and to three nationals of Syria. In all, **eight persons were granted international protection** (seven persons were granted subsidiary protection and one refugee status) **in the first half of 2022. 377 persons expressed intention to seek asylum** in Serbia (as compared to 529 in May).

The number of refugees and migrants in the territory of Serbia



UNHCR and its NGO partners provided legal counseling to **326** persons including UASC, gender-based violence (GBV) survivors, and Roma. **385** persons likely in need of international protection were assisted. UNHCR continued to monitor the progress of four refugee awardees of DAFI scholarship and provided additional support for the annual exams.

47 UASC are receiving various forms of UNHCR support including through the guardianship care system of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MOLESVA).

NGO partner Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) participated in UNHCR-NGO Global Consultations where climate actions, local initiatives, and the crisis in Ukraine were discussed.

World Refugee Day

Honoring World Refugee Day (WRD) on 20 June, UNHCR and partners organized a series of activities, including theatre plays, sports events, panel discussions, art and skills workshops, and photo exhibitions across the country.

The exhibition “What They Took with Them”, was displayed for ten days on the premises of the Ethnographic Museum. It was dedicated to all those who were forced to flee their homes due to wars and persecution. The exhibition was inspired by [the video of the same name](#), produced by UNHCR in collaboration with Branka Katić, a famous Serbian actress, and UNHCR High Profile Supporter.

The event itself also brought in an additional value, as one of the keynote speakers, Darija Kisić, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, a former refugee herself, moved by the exhibition shared her own refugee experience with the audience at the exhibition’s opening.



Commissioner for Refugees Vladimir Cucić, UNHCR Acting-Representative Stefanie Krause, and Minister Darija Kisić



Refugees from former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Africa, and Ukraine lent to UNHCR the object they had brought with them when they left their homes behind



Playful African melodies together with energetic children’s improvisations created a unique fusion of sounds and rhythms

On the eve of WRD, an **open-air concert** on a frequented promenade along the Danube, promoted cultural exchange and social inclusion. It gathered children from socially vulnerable groups, refugee and local children as well as the dance group of asylum-seekers from Burundi accommodated in the asylum centre Krnjača.



The tournament gathered 20 children

As sport has the power of overcoming barriers, a **football tournament between refugee and migrant children from a reception centre and local children** was held in Šid, Northern Serbia. The tournament was supported by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) and UNHCR partner Humanitarian Center for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT).



Young refugees and their local peers stood side by side in cleaning the bank of the river Sava

In line with its commitment to contributing to the reduction of the global environmental footprint, **UNHCR organized the cleaning of the banks of the river Sava in Obrenovac**. The participants included 27 refugees and migrants from the asylum centre, the students of the Obrenovac Technical School, and their biology teacher. The event was also supported by SCRM, and partner Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC). The passers-by expressed their support and gratitude and asked to be included in similar activities the next time.

All the events, and in particular the featured ones, generated a lot of electronic and print media interest.

In honor of World Refugee Day **IKEA has started their campaign “Together for all refugees”** by setting up a “refugee room” in their store in Serbia, videos on their website, the Facebook and Instagram pages. The link to UNHCR’s website section on ways to support refugees is displayed on their website.

In addition to featured events, UNHCR-supported NGO partners organized a range of engaging events aiming at the promotion of refugee inclusion and integration. Partner BCHR organized the premiere of a theatre play “We All Came from Somewhere”, a piece about first-hand experiences of being a refugee, tackling xenophobia, and local community contribution towards improving the image of people forced to flee. Another partner Research and Society Development Centre (IDEAS) invited experts and practitioners to write and edit [texts related to refugee/asylum/refugee crises/international refugee law on Wikipedia](#) at the initiative of Wikipedia. The materials from UNHCR Serbia and other relevant websites/channels were used/ linked to offer the audiences accurate and reliable sources of information on these themes.

Employment & Entrepreneurship

An asylum-seeker with a disability from Cameroon joined the eight refugees and asylum-seekers who started a three-month internship in **IKEA Serbia** in April as part of the second round of **The Skills for Employment** programme. The programme is now expanded to include more diverse aspects, such as disability.

UNHCR Serbia developed a newsletter intended for the private sector. The first edition was distributed to existing and potential partners. A meeting was held with **ERSTE Bank** to introduce UNHCR mandate and refugee-related issues, as well as to discuss modalities of cooperation.

Partner BCHR started a **blog on refugees as successful entrepreneurs** in Serbia. A series of integration-related stories aims to boost the local integration of refugees in Serbia.

Action on SEA & SH prevention/response, AGD initiatives: Danish Refugee Council (DRC) provided information, counselling and referrals to the relevant state agencies and service providers. The same NGO partner together with SCRM organised **interactive workshops** for 23 participants on reproductive health/family planning, COVID-19 preventive measures and psychosocial support, supervision of children – legal aspects in Serbia as well as workshops on the labor rights of asylum-seekers.

Education

UNHCR attended the graduation ceremony and gave out diplomas to students who participated in the Refugee Law Clinic, School of Law, Novi Sad. UNHCR has been conducting the Legal Clinic on Asylum and Refugee Law at Universities in Belgrade and Novi Sad for more than 15 years, thus cultivating new generations of law professionals and future decision-makers ready to support the refugee cause in Serbia.

The Faculty of Applied Arts organised an exhibition for the academic 2021/22 where the works of two UNHCR-supported refugee students were displayed. The two boys are among the first four refugees from outside the region who enrolled in universities in Serbia. The exhibition represents the continuation of their successful integration.



Sami Rasouli, module Contemporary clothing

Reza Sharifi, module Applied painting

Due to the increased number of francophone asylum-seekers, a library of French books was established in the Asylum Centre Krnjača in cooperation with the Faculty of Philology.

Refugees from Ukraine in Serbia

UNHCR continues to organize regular inter-agency meetings on the Ukraine situation. On 13 June, UNHCR briefed on the initial findings of the consultations with SCRM trustees on the situation of Ukrainian refugees in four municipalities in Vojvodina area and south of Serbia.

As of 30 June, 77 Ukrainian refugees were accommodated in the Centre Vranje run by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration. **13 Ukrainian children attend primary and two attend secondary Serbian schools** (data of the Ministry of Education). Transportation is ensured by SCRM. Most of the children also attend online classes held by the Ukrainian education system.

UNHCR partner INDIGO is organizing educational and recreational activities for refugee children and assisting them with homework and catch-up on the regular curriculum. Serbian language classes are organised by partner Sigma Plus since 23 May. UNHCR-supported interpreter for the Ukrainian language is present in the Centre 4h/7 to assist SCRM with the interpretation and issuance of documents. A doctor and a UNHCR partner-supported psychologist maintain a regular presence at the Centre.

In all, **774 persons were registered for temporary protection** in the period 25 February – 30 June. In the same period, **720 persons were issued Decisions on Temporary Protection**, which the authorities started issuing formally on 5 May.



Common space in the Centre Vranje

On 9 June, through **the UNHCR-IKEA partnership**, the common space in the Centre Vranje was remodeled and furnished. The project is part of the initiative *A Better Place to Call Home*.

UNHCR Serbia is grateful for the support of all the donors who contribute to UNHCR activities,
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IKEA SEE | Microsoft Serbia