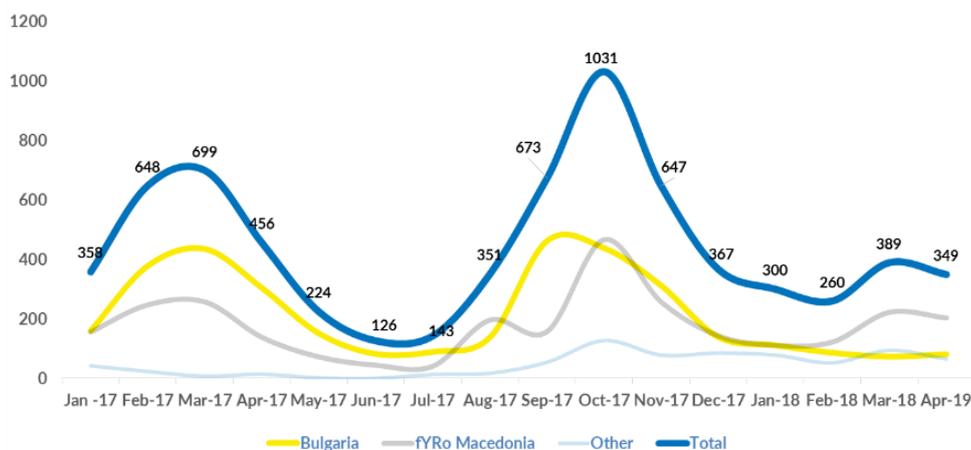


Trends in arrivals of new refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers to Serbia during the first four months of 2018

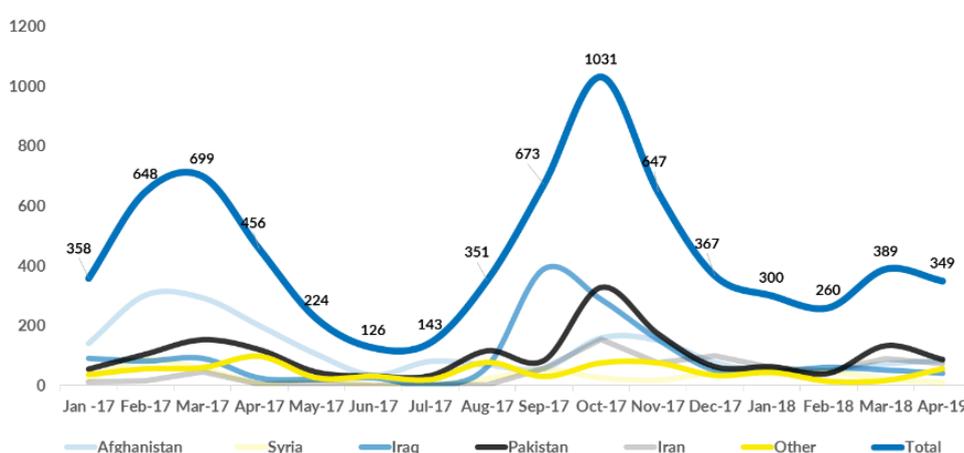
General

UNHCR Serbia and partners under its programme continued to observe new arrivals in 2018¹: both irregular movements through green borders as well as by air to Belgrade airport. Below charts show the arrival trend from the beginning of 2017 through April 2018 by country of transit and by nationality.

Observed arrivals by country of transit



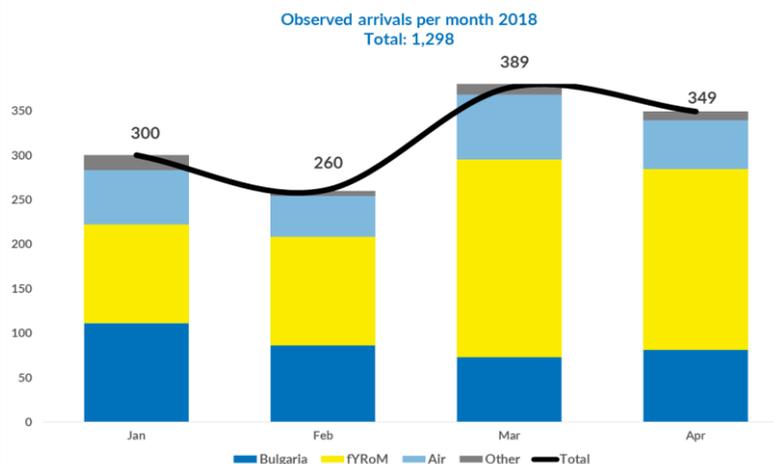
Observed arrivals by country of origin



¹ In the absence of official statistics on newly arriving refugees/migrants to Serbia, this document can capture only those that have been encountered and/or assisted by mobile teams of UNHCR and its partner organisations that include BCHR, CRPC, DRC, HCIT, Indigo, Sigma, etc. Even though these teams regularly visit numerous locations throughout Serbia where refugees/migrants gather, they do not encounter refugees/migrants that are being kept out of public spaces by smugglers, that stay unregistered and short-term in transit-Centres, etc. As such the real number of new arrivals to Serbia might easily be much higher, maybe even double, the numbers reported in this document.

First four months in 2018

January-April 2018, UNHCR and partners observed **1,298** new arrivals, detecting the following trends in country of transit/arrival mode and overall numbers:

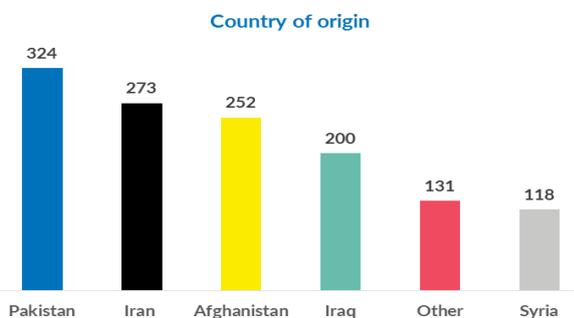


The total observed new arrivals in the first four months of 2018 represent 48% of those in the last four months of 2017 and 60% of all observed arrivals in Jan-Apr 2017.

Below charts reflect **Jan-Apr 2018 observed new arrivals** according to country of origin, country of transit as well as age/gender:

Country of origin:

- Pakistan: 25%
- Iran: 21%
- Afghanistan: 19%
- Iraq: 15%
- Syria: 9%
- All other countries: 11%



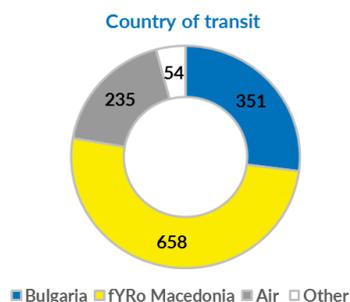
Nationals of Pakistan overtook nationals of Iraq to become the largest single group of observed new arrivals (25% of all observed arrivals – though increase of 1% only in terms of the total share compared to Sept-Dec 2017); followed by those originating from Iran (21% - increase by 7%), Afghanistan (19% - increase by 3%), Iraq (15% - decrease by 17%) and Syria (9% - increase by 4%).

Of particular concern is the once again increasing number of arrivals of **unaccompanied and separated children (UASC)**, who **make up 12% of total observed arrivals in Jan-Apr 2018** (compared to 8% of arrivals during Sept-Dec 2017). These children are mainly boys originating from Afghanistan and Pakistan, which arrive by land through dangerous journeys. For the first time after November 2017, UNHCR and partners also observed arrivals of **five UASC girls**, one from Congo and four from Somalia, now accommodated with a group of women from Somalia also travelling alone. UNHCR and partners prioritise attending to the protection needs of all UASC as many are highly vulnerable to exploitation or abuse.

The trickle of observed arrivals of men and boys originating from Bangladesh noted in the last four months of 2017 seems to have abated for the moment. Observed arrivals of men and boys originating from Algeria and Tunisia have all but disappeared and observed arrivals of Morocco nationals remain negligible. A slightly higher number of recorded pushbacks compared to the number of observed arrivals of nationals of these three countries would indicate their fairly low-profile movements.

Country of transit/arrival mode:

- fYRo Macedonia: 50%
- Bulgaria: 27%
- Air: 18%
- Other: 5%



While in the last four months of 2017, Bulgaria was in the lead as a country of transit of new arrivals (50%), while only 38% of observed new arrivals reported to have travelled through fYRo Macedonia, **in the first four months of 2018 fYRo Macedonia by far takes the lead at 50% of all arrivals**, followed by Bulgaria at 27% and arrivals by air (nationals of Iran) at 18% of the total observed arrivals (an increase of 10% compared to previous four months).

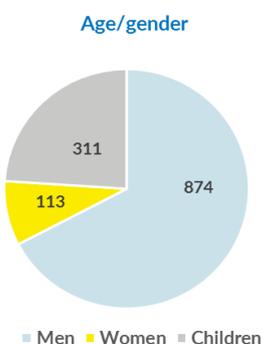
Below charts with breakdown of nationalities by arrival through fYR Macedonia and Bulgaria, indicate that Pakistani nationals mostly arrive via the former and Afghan nationals via Bulgaria.



As can be seen below, there are **more men arriving (67%)** compared to the last four months of 2017 (58%), 9% of all arrivals are women and as many as **24% are children**. Women and children (apart from UASC, reported on above) mainly arrive as families from Iraq, Iran and occasionally Syria.

Age/Gender:

- Men: 67%
- Women: 9%
- Children: 24%



Following the decrease in regular admissions into Hungary in late January, many newly arriving families and those already accommodated in government centres headed directly towards the Serbia's borders

with EUMS, some returning following unsuccessful attempts to re-enter the EU irregularly. This resulted in increased numbers of collective expulsions, including of families with small children, school dropouts, etc. and significant fluctuations in terms of presence in accommodation centres.

Profiling

UNHCR and partners survey new arrivals they encounter or assist and, during the first four months in 2018, conducted standardised profiling excises of new arrivals in Belgrade city centre that comprised 40% of all observed new arrivals.

- **Arrivals from Pakistan**

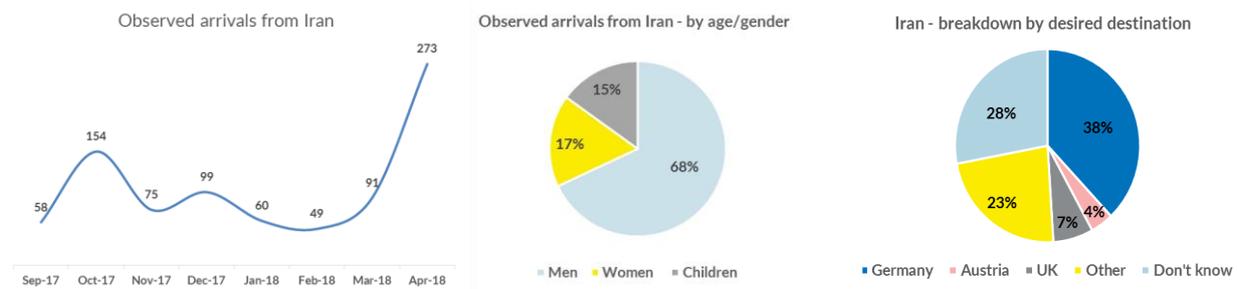
The trend of new arrivals of nationals of Pakistan continued, constituting a quarter of all arrivals in Jan-Apr 2018. Most (84%) reported to be of Punjabi background. Mostly were single men, including UASC - of the total of 154 observed UASC arrivals in Jan-Apr 2018, 24% were Pakistani boys.



92% of the profiled nationals of Pakistan arrived via Turkey (-Bulgaria) -Greece -fYRo Macedonia route. 56% of those profiled travelled for more than 12 months, 16% between 9 and 12 months, while the remaining 28% travelled between 1 and 9 months. 30% of those surveyed shared that Italy was their desired final destination, and another 19% indicated that they wanted to reach France. Third most desired destination was Germany (15% of all respondents).

- **Arrivals from Iran**

While 386 Iranian nationals were encountered in the last four months of 2017, and 273 in the first four months of 2018, their share in overall arrivals increased by 7% to 21% of all arrivals in Jan-Apr 2018. They include both families and single men. Over 90% nationals of Iran arrive under the visa-free regime by air via Istanbul or Moscow and, as of March, directly from Tehran on one of the five direct flights each week. Smaller numbers of men originating from Iran are arriving by land from Bulgaria and fYRo Macedonia.



56% of surveyed Iranian nationals take only up to a week to travel from Iran to Serbia, having in mind the predominant mode of travel by air.

A large share of persons from Iran are intent on reaching Germany (38%), others either have no clear destination in mind, or would like to reach the UK, Austria, etc.

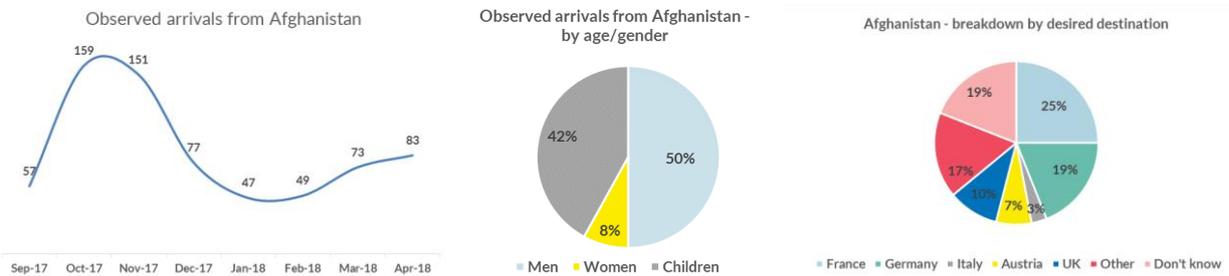
Having realised that irregular entry into EU is either difficult or highly unlikely in present circumstances, 469 Iranian nationals registered their intent to seek asylum in Serbia in the first four months of 2018, in order to access accommodation and services, and 38 returned to Iran through assisted voluntary return (AVR).

- **Arrivals from Afghanistan**

Although arrivals of persons originating from Afghanistan decreased with the winter weather and has not returned to the levels prior to November 2017, the overall share of nationals of Afghanistan among the total observed new arrivals remained stable – 16-19%. Among them, Pashtun ethnicity continues to take up the majority of 58%. Overall, the vast majority of the observed new arrivals of Afghanistan nationals are single males. **37% of all arrivals originating from Afghanistan are UASC and 60% of the total UASC observed arrivals in Jan-Apr 2018 were boys from Afghanistan.**

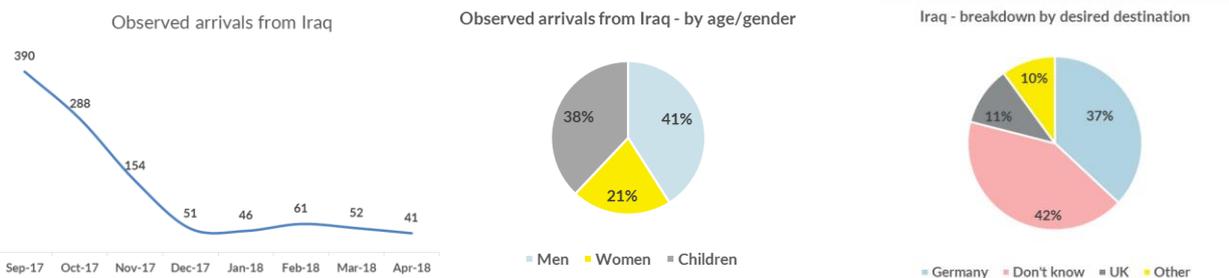
The arrival route of nationals of Afghanistan is now equally distributed between Bulgaria and FYRo Macedonia. The time which persons from Afghanistan take to reach Serbia is very different, with 19% of respondents stating that it took over a year for them to reach Serbia (including due to longer stay in countries along the route).

Preferred destinations of persons originating from Afghanistan are as diverse as those of persons from Iran, with a quarter wishing to reach France, almost a quarter to reach Germany, others wanting to reach UK, etc.



- **Arrivals from Iraq**

The number of observed arrivals originating from Iraq (**mainly families**) in the first four months of 2018 decreased in comparison to the preceding four months, to remain in 2018 at a stable average of 50 arrivals per month. Most (79%) of arrivals of Iraq nationals were of Kurdish background, followed by 16% of Yazidi background, etc.



Persons originating from Iraq have been arriving in almost equal shares from Bulgaria and from FYRo Macedonia, now travelling for longer periods of time - between 1 month and a year - during which they spend 2,000-5,000 euros per person. 37% of interviewed nationals of Iraq cited Germany as their preferred destination, and an equal number of them was not sure about desired final destination. 11% were intent on UK, and 11% on different other destinations.

In the light of ever diminishing access to asylum in EUMS and diminishing options for durable solutions, family reunification, et al, the desired countries of destination seem to have either diversified or completely blurred, with respondents expressing feelings of increasing anxiety and lack of clarity on their future and their plans, making them more vulnerable to human smuggling/trafficking and other dangers along the route.

General population demographics

Below charts reflect the fluctuation in occupancy of government-run centres in the period Apr 2017 - Apr 2018, by age/gender and main countries of origin.

