

UNHCR SERBIA UPDATE

As at end-July, **4,701** (decrease by 7%) **refugees and migrants are in the territory of Serbia**, of which 3,618 are accommodated in 19 governmental centres across the country, 30 in specialised institutions for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), 127 in private accommodation and 1,053 staying rough outside the centres.



Workshop with children in UNICEF Child Friendly Space at Reception Transit Center Šid

5,732 newcomers to governmental centres were registered in July (vs. 4,111 in June). Arrivals came through North Macedonia (74%), Bulgaria (15%), Montenegro (5%) and other (6%). More than 44% of them originate from Afghanistan and 22% from Pakistan, followed by Bangladesh, Somalia, Syria & Iran. July saw **1,474** (increase by 43%) **pushbacks** from neighboring countries. Nationals of Syria make up 30% of pushbacks, mainly men but also families, pushed back from Hungary, Romania, Croatia & Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The positive trend of recognitions in Serbia in second quarter of 2021 continued in July with the Asylum Office (AO) granting **2 subsidiary protections** to nationals of Syria and **2 refugee status** to nationals of Burundi, making a total of **6 subsidiary protections** and **3 refugee status in 2021**. In July, 149 persons expressed intention to seek asylum in Serbia and 19 submitted actual applications.

UNHCR and partners **counselled 211 persons on asylum**, of which **five gave power of attorney** for representation in asylum procedure to UNHCR project lawyers. **Thirty-five refugees received ID cards** and **15 received work permits** in July owing to efforts of UNHCR's legal partner Belgrade Center for Human Rights (BCHR).

On 7 July, the Government of Serbia, UNHCR, UNDP and the National Council of Roma signed a joint **Statement of Intent for cooperation on inclusion of Roma and other vulnerable groups**. Twenty-six young Roma have thus far found employment, in local self-governments, NGOs and the private sector, through the joint UNHCR-UNDP project which promotes local inclusion of Roma volunteers. On behalf of the Government, the statement was signed by **Gordana Comic, Minister of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue**.



UNHCR legal counselling in Divljana

A tripartite **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNHCR, National Employment Service and Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration was signed on 9 July**, with the aim to address challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees in integration in the labor market in Serbia. Areas of cooperation consist of information sessions and capacity building, and joint work on facilitating access for refugees and asylum-seekers to economic integration.



Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Vladimir Cucić, National Employment Service director Zoran Martinović & Stefanie Krause, UNHCR

UNHCR implemented and finalized **all the contracted refurbishment works on Banja Koviljača Asylum Centre**, implemented through partner DRC, which lasted for 2.5 months and was funded by EU. Reopening of this asylum centre is planned for late September-early October, and meanwhile its residents are accommodated in Krnjača Asylum Centre in Belgrade.

On 6 July, Minister for Public Administration and Local Self-Government M. Obradovic, the Ombudsperson Z. Pasalic and the **UNHCR Representative** participated in the media event in Belgrade which presented the report **Persons at risk of statelessness in Serbia - Overview of current situation and the way forward**, supported by UNHCR, in the framework of the tripartite MoU on joint cooperation. The survey has shown that the joint efforts have

brought about an improvement reflected in 42% less persons at risk of statelessness compared to 2015.

UNHCR partner **BCHR** received an opinion of the **Commissioner for the Protection of Equality**, by which it was found that **Banca Intesa a.d. Belgrade had violated Anti-Discrimination Act** since it had directly discriminated against refugees and asylum seekers in Serbia when it refused to allow them to open bank accounts.

UNHCR partner **HCIT** took part in the preparation of the second **PRAB report – Protecting Rights at Borders**, prepared by the network of European NGOs that are documenting testimonies regarding the mistreatment of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and different practices along the EU and non EU borders.



Four refugees enrolled in Belgrade University for 2021/2022 academic year, @UNHCR, 30 July

INTEGRATION BREAKTHROUGH: Following months of preparation for entrance exams supported by UNHCR partners, advocacy and an MoU with Faculty of Applied Arts, **four young refugees, including two former Unaccompanied Children from Afghanistan, a youth from Libya and a young woman from Burundi succeeded in enrolling into Faculties of Applied Arts, Economy and Chemistry.**

The DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship programme swiftly accepted to support their studying costs. UNHCR Serbia will continue to identify potential cases for support in enrolment in tertiary education amongst the refugees and asylum-seekers in Serbia.

The Government of Germany and UNHCR started the Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI program) in 1992. Today, the German Government remains the largest donor to the program.

Over the past 30 years the program enabled access to tertiary education to 18.000 refugees in over 50 countries around the world. DAFI program is model for building resilience, self-reliance and expanding solutions for refugees and communities.

DAFI plays a key role in buffering the interruption of individual educational pathways, opening prospects for refugee youth and ensuring that their rights and protection needs are respected.



REFUGEES in the SDGs: SCRM issued the [Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia for 2020](#), which, for the first time in the region, includes national indicators for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) concerning refugees and asylum-seekers.

These indicators will inform UNHCR planning in the next three years and provide evidence to support the mixed migration response.

UNHCR Serbia is grateful for the support of:

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