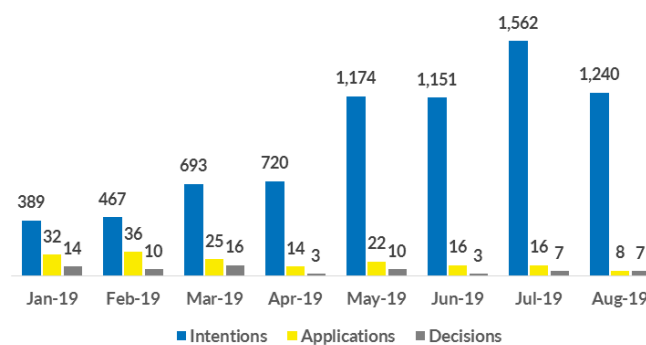


SERBIA UPDATE

- UNHCR and partners counselled over **2,300** asylum-seekers at over thirty sites throughout the country. Eleven asylum-seekers, including two unaccompanied or separated children (UASC), signed powers of attorney for UNHCR project lawyers to represent them in asylum procedures. UNHCR and partners also assisted asylum authorities with interpretation, cultural mediation and psychological assessments. **237** UASC benefitted from guardianship under the UNHCR project
- **1,240** foreigners registered their intention to seek asylum with the Ministry of Interior (MOI) of Serbia, now adding up to 7,396 during the first eight months of this year. Eight lodged substantive **asylum claims** with the Asylum Office (AO) of the MOI, now adding up to 169 substantive new claims during the first eight months of this year. The AO decided on seven claims, granting refugee status to one and subsidiary protection to another asylum seeker, while rejecting five claims. In the first eight months of 2019, the AO granted protection to **29** persons.

Asylum intentions/applications/decisions



- On 19 August, the **United Nations Committee Against Torture** declared Serbia responsible for violating Art. 3 and Art. 22 of the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* when it extradited an asylum-seeker on 25 December 2017. UNHCR project lawyers had represented this asylum seeker, trying to prevent his *refoulement*.
- Continuing its support to the implementation of the **Regional Housing Programme**, UNHCR joined refugees, the First Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Ivica Dačić, the Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration (SCRM), local authorities as well as representatives of donors and the OSCE in handing the keys to 20 new apartments each in Vrnjačka Banja (3 August) and Temerin (22 August).
- The **joint Local Integration Team** of the SCRM and UNHCR conducted 32 home visits to refugees, preparing individual integration plans, and systematised legal information pertaining to local integration to produce a brochure with practical integration advice for refugees.
- UNHCR partner Belgrade Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) alone counselled 95 refugees and asylum-seekers on local integration, obtained work permits for ten and ID cards for four, while UNHCR assisted the **integration** of 45 with cash-based interventions.
- On 8-9 August, UNHCR partner Danish Refugee Council organised a go-and-see visit for eight **internally displaced persons** to Klinovac-Klinafc, Klina/e municipality.
- UNHCR Serbia compiled and issued monthly updates of its [Statistical Snapshot](#) and [Joint Site Assessments](#). With over 41,000 views, the latter remained a most popular and trusted information product.
- A very high number of 1,169 asylum seekers alleged **collective expulsions** from neighbouring countries (399 from Bosnia and Herzegovina, 358 from Croatia, 319 from Hungary and 93 from Romania). 64% of them alleged to have been **denied access to asylum** and 53% maltreatment by authorities of these countries.

- On 26 August, a 16 y.o. UASC from Afghanistan was apprehended by the Croatian police upon entering Croatia irregularly, as a part of a small group of UASC and adults. After his push-back to Serbia he had to receive medical treatment for a broken rib and thoracic concussion and articulated allegations of severe mistreatment at the hands of Croatian authorities. A subsequent [press statement](#) by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) prompted a [response](#) by the Ministry of Interior of Croatia. On 28 August, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs Mr. Zoran Đorđević visited the UASC.



UNHCR supported the participation of 10 unaccompanied and separated children in Tara National Park camping trip, ©UNHCR, August 2019

- UNHCR and partners surveyed **3,673** newly arriving asylum-seekers and migrants, the highest number of new arrivals in a single month since February 2016. 37% were national of Pakistan, 34% Afghanistan, 9% Iraq, 6% Bangladesh and 3% Somalia. 80% were adult men, 4% adult women and 16% children, incl. 314 UASC. 80% entered Serbia from North Macedonia, 11% from Bulgaria, and 8% from Albania.
- The number of asylum-seekers and migrants counted in Serbia decreased by 13% to **2,997** at the end of August. 2,420 of them were accommodated in 16 Asylum or Reception/Transit Centres. 72% were adult men, 9% adult women and 19% children; 42% are citizens of Afghanistan, 15% of Pakistan, 13% of Iran, 10% of Bangladesh, 5% of Iraq and 4% of Syria. Almost 580 were observed sleeping rough, around 350 in Belgrade City and 230 near the borders with Croatia, Hungary or Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Special thanks to major donors of unearmarked contributions- 2019¹ | USD

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¹ Contributed without restrictions on its use, unearmarked funding allows UNHCR critical flexibility in how best to reach refugees and other populations of concern who are in the greatest need and at the greatest risk. Where a donor has contribution \$10 million or more, the total amount of the contribution is shown.

² Due to their earmarking at the region or sub-region, or to a related situation or theme, the other softly earmarked contributions listed are those which can potentially be used for Serbia. Where a donor has contributed \$2 million or more, the total amount of the contributions is shown.