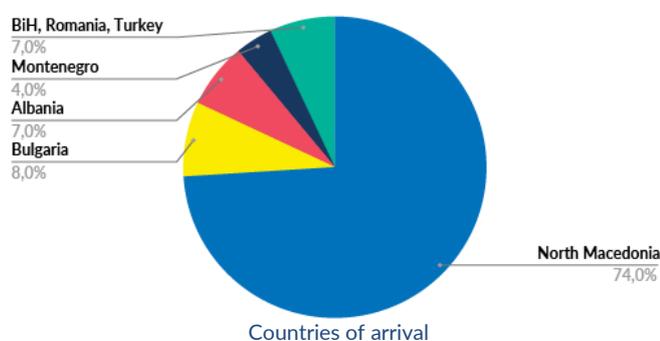


## UNHCR SERBIA UPDATE

As at end-August, **5,051** (increase by 7%) **refugees and migrants are in the territory of Serbia**, of which 4,102 are accommodated in 13 operational governmental centres across the country, 37 in specialised institutions for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), 127 in private accommodation and 875 staying rough outside the centres.

**7,101** newcomers to governmental centres were registered in August (vs. 5,732 in July). Twenty-six percent of all arrivals originate from Afghanistan.

August saw **2,483 pushbacks** from neighboring countries to Serbia (65% from Hungary, 29% from Romania, 5% from Croatia and 1% from Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)). Nationals of Syria make up 36% of all the pushbacks, mainly men but also a couple of families, and 31% of all pushed back persons are young men and unaccompanied boys from Afghanistan.



Number of refugees and migrants in the territory of Serbia

In August, the Asylum Office (AO) of the Ministry of Interior of Serbia made no recognitions but rejected two applications by nationals of Cuba and Syria. In August, 237 expressed intention to seek asylum in Serbia and eight submitted actual applications. 1,315 asylum-seekers newly arrived in asylum centres in August, and 1,196 asylum-seekers absconded from them. By end-August, AO has granted **subsidiary protection to six and refugee status to three persons in 2021.**



DAFI scholarship agreements' signing event at UNHCR in Belgrade



The team from Syria presents their national dishes at Days of Banica food festival in Bela Palanka, Serbia

UNHCR and partners counselled 920 persons on asylum, of which 12 signed power of attorney over to UNHCR project lawyers; four refugees obtained ID cards and six obtained working permits.

Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) placed another reception transit centre – Divljana in the east of the country – into a standby mode, leaving 13 out of the total of 20 governmental centres operational. Serbia remains with 6,000 hard shelter places in its twenty existing asylum/reception-transit centres.

Serbian northern city of Sombor applied to participate in the conference *Cities pledging to implement the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)*, which will be held on 22 September, in preparation for the High-Level Official Meeting that will take place in December, as follow up on GCR implementation.

On 11 August, UNHCR Serbia delivered, as regular planned introduction, a UNHCR operational briefing to the newly arrived contingent of 28 Frontex officers deployed at Gradina border crossing point, near Dimitrovgrad, at Serbia-Bulgaria border.

Following the signature of MoU in July 2021, UNHCR met with the National Employment Service (NES) and SCRM on 19 August, when the staff of the parties to the tripartite MoU, who will be responsible for its implementation, were introduced and the annual workplan for 2021 was finalised, outlining the actions that will promote the employment and employability of refugees and asylum-seekers in Serbia.

UNHCR, in cooperation with IOM, the SCRM and the UN Resident Coordinator Office, organised a donor/partners' briefing on Afghanistan situation and response on 26 August. UNHCR stressed that the most significant humanitarian needs are in Afghanistan, advocated for donor support within Afghanistan and to the neighbouring host countries and highlighted the importance of maintaining access to asylum in Europe.

In view of preparations for the beginning of new school year on 1 September, partner Belgrade Centre for Human Rights supported six children accommodated privately and in centres to enroll and be equipped for school. Partner Praxis equipped 24 Roma children with school bags and school supplies.

Together with mayor of Novi Sad, OSCE Mission to Serbia and SCRM representatives, UNHCR Representative visited on 4 August the **construction site of accommodation for refugees in Veternik** in Novi Sad, one of the biggest sites within the **Regional Housing Programme (RHP)**. "More than 5,800 refugee families have so far got not only their homes, but also an opportunity for a decent life through the RHP", said UNHCR Representative to present media.



Mayor of Novi Sad, UNHCR Representative, OSCE Mission to Serbia representative at the RHP construction site in Veternik

UNHCR partner Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC) procured a car-mechanic course to an asylum seeker from Burundi and accounting course for two refugees from Cuba and Burundi. An extremely vulnerable refugee from Nigeria was provided with food assistance.



Peer Educator Workshop for UASC, implemented by CRPC, Niš

UNHCR partner IKEA Serbia delivered a donation of furniture and home furnishings (tables and chairs, sofa, learning tables and chairs, chandeliers, bed sheets and quilts, different decorations, cutlery and dishes) to Zmaj Home for UASC in Belgrade.

Four refugees who managed to get enrolled in Belgrade University in July signed contracts on DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarships in the UN House in Belgrade on 11 August, which will help them cover the expenses of their upcoming studies. UNHCR Serbia featured their story in [The Biggest Step so Far, Towards Their Future](#) article.

A [press release](#) on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the 1961 UN Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness was distributed to the media, along with the link to the [Persons at Risk of Statelessness in Serbia](#) report, the findings of which were quoted by the media.

On 14 August, two refugees from Syria participated at [Days of Banica](#) in Bela Palanka within the International Cuisine presentations. These refugees, accommodated in nearby Divljana reception centre, prepared three Syrian national dishes which were tasted by 150 locals, and their participation was facilitated by UNHCR partner Sigma Plus.

UNHCR partners organized five **workshops on cultural sensitivity**, focusing on cultural differences regarding family life, education, communication, socializing and clothing, in institutions for accommodation of UASC in Niš, Vodovodska and Loznica as well as in asylum centres Krnjača and Bogovađa.

UNHCR Serbia issued an information note [The heaviest toll of Afghanistan's conflict is on displaced women and children](#), reflecting both the domestic and the global situation of Afghan refugees, and the Representative gave a feature [interview](#).

**UNHCR Serbia is grateful for the support of:**

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