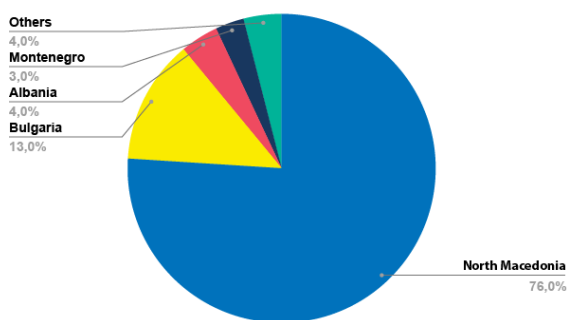


UNHCR SERBIA UPDATE

As at end-October, **6,150** (decrease by 1%) **refugees and migrants are in the territory of Serbia**, of which 4,706 are accommodated in 13 operational governmental centres across the country, 24 in specialised institutions for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC), 127 in private accommodation and 1,190 staying rough outside the centres.

6,570 newcomers to governmental centres were registered in October (vs. 8,978 in September). 2,455 persons originating from Afghanistan arrived in centres in Serbia in October (comp. to 2,502 in September).

October saw **3,323** (increase by 68% comp. to September) **pushbacks** from neighboring countries to Serbia (76% from Hungary, 21% from Romania, 2% from Croatia and 1% from BiH). Nationals of Syria make up 65% of all the pushbacks, mainly men but also families, and 17% of all pushed back persons are young men and unaccompanied boys from Afghanistan.



Countries of arrival



Number of refugees and migrants in Serbia's territory

On 7 October, Serbian human rights lawyer Nikola Kovačević was officially presented with the Nansen Award for assistance to refugees at a ceremony in the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway in Belgrade. The award ceremony was attended by the Prime Minister of Serbia Ana Brnabić, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to Serbia H.E. Mr. Jørn Eugen Erling Gjelstad, Ambassador of Switzerland to Serbia H.E. Urs Schmid, Serbian Commissioner for Refugees and Migration Mr. Vladimir Cucić, the UNHCR Representative Francesca Bonelli, and numerous other guests including EU Delegation and IKEA.



Official presentation of regional Nansen Refugee Award to human rights lawyer Nikola Kovačević, @UNHCR, Oct 2021



In her meeting with the UNHCR Representative, Prime Minister of Serbia Ana Brnabić noted the progress that Serbia has made in terms of protection of refugees, owing to cooperation with UNHCR, @Tanjug, Oct 2021

After more than 350 media articles published globally on the regional Nansen Awardee Nikola Kovačević, a [video](#) of his conversation with refugee rights High Profile Supporter in Serbia, actress Branka Katić, was published across UNHCR social media platforms. UNHCR launched its **Instagram profile**, which is now up and running at the following [link](#).

In October, the Asylum Office (AO) of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) of Serbia made another two recognitions, granting asylum to two applicants originating from Iran (represented by UNHCR project lawyers) and Pakistan; two applications by nationals of Ghana and Senegal were rejected. Three hundred and thirteen persons expressed intention to seek asylum in Serbia in October, and 20 submitted actual applications. 943 asylum-seekers newly arrived in governmental centres in October, and 1,029 absconded from them. **By end-October, the AO has granted subsidiary protection to six and refugee status to seven persons in 2021** (compared to 29 recognitions in 2020 and 35 recognitions in 2019).

UNHCR and partners counselled over 1,380 persons on asylum in October; three persons gave power of attorney to UNHCR project lawyers for representation in asylum procedures; six refugees received ID cards and five work permits with support from UNHCR.



UNHCR High Profile Supporter actress Branka Katić congratulates human rights lawyer Nikola Kovačević on Nansen Refugee Award, @UNHCR, Oct 2021

Four and a half months following the submission of complaint to the Commissioner for Equality of the Republic of Serbia by UNHCR partners BCHR and A11 Initiative, **the Commissioner decided in October that Raiffeisenbank Serbia had violated the provisions of Article 6 of the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination by refusing to establish a business relationship - open an account for refugees from Iran, solely based on their nationality, and communicated relevant recommendations to the bank accordingly.**

Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) informed **on Global Refugee Forum (GRF) pledges** that, out of five pledges, four are fully realized, including those related to integration and education, while the one related to early warning and emergency preparedness is in progress.

UNHCR gave a presentation to private companies in Serbia engaged in the **UN Global Compact (UNGC) Network**. The presentation aimed at giving more visibility to refugee matters, particularly those related to employment possibilities. UNCHR Serbia and IKEA presented the Refugee Skills for Employment Project at the info session for the GIZ Call for Companies to participate in the economic empowerment of Roma and other marginalized groups.

Over 100 refugees and asylum-seekers were assisted by UNHCR and partners in October in opting for local integration through finding employment opportunities and/or private accommodation, support to starting a business, support to education/reskilling and classes in Serbian language; 16 households/35 persons will be supported by UNHCR in November through cash-based intervention and one-time winterization allowance.



International Women's Club of Belgrade delivering humanitarian assistance to families with children in Krnjača Asylum Centre, Belgrade, @IWC, 1 Nov 2021

UNHCR and partner HCIT organized in Belgrade a **workshop on "The Importance of Interpretation in the Asylum Procedure"**, featuring participation of 30 interpreters for Farsi, Arab, Kurdish, Urdu, Bengali, Turkish, Russian, Uzbek, English, French and Spanish, who are either working with or wish to start working with asylum-seekers. Participants were familiarized with the UNHCR mandate and 1951 Convention, the national Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection and asylum procedure in Serbia.

With the Law Faculty of the University in Belgrade, UNHCR inaugurated the new generation of 35 students of the **"Refugee Clinic"**, i.e. law students attending a specialized course in refugee law supported by the UNHCR.

On 1 October, UNHCR/UNDP Young Volunteers project team organised a one-day event in the backyard of “Branko Pešić” school of further education in Zemun, which educates local and refugee children, gathering round schoolchildren, UNVs and unaccompanied and separated children from specialised institutions. The local and refugee youngsters involved in mural painting, which earned significant media coverage, sports, music and dance activities and competitions.



Refugee and Roma children painting a mural of friendship on the walls of Branko Pešić School in Zemun, Belgrade, @CRPC, Oct 2021

UNHCR and the First Secretary of the German Embassy to Serbia met with the Dean of the Faculty of Applied Arts and Vice Dean of Faculty of Chemistry of University in Belgrade and their teams to present the **DAFI** (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative) scholarship programme and inform that three refugee students enrolled in their Faculties as of June 2021 are awardees of DAFI. These Faculties expressed readiness to support refugee students and monitor their progress in collaboration with UNHCR and DAFI representatives.

Two hundred and thirty primary and secondary Roma pupils are currently supported in attending schools in Serbia through partnership of UNHCR with Indigo.

Fifty refugee children, accommodated in Krnjača Asylum Centre, received backpacks filled with school supplies, clothes and shoes, donated by the **International Women’s Club** of Belgrade.

Partners Praxis and A11 Initiative visited 12 informal Roma (IDP) settlements in eight Serbian municipalities and counselled 158 persons on accessing social and housing rights; **following legal assistance from Praxis, five persons at risk of statelessness had their Serbian citizenship granted/confirmed in October.**

Partner IDEAS trained 10 child protection workers on legal status determination, the role of centres for social work in UASC protection, the role of field workers, informing UASC about their rights in Serbia, identifying vulnerable UASC and referral mechanisms and adequate application of rewards and punishments for children exhibiting behavioural problems. Six UASC accommodated in specialised institutions were under guardianship by IDEAS.

With regard to child, early and forced marriages (CEFM) activities, a workshop for two groups of 46 schoolchildren in total, including internally displaced, was organized by partner Praxis in primary school “Živadin Apostolović” in Trstenik. The school agreed to include CEFM issues into regular school curriculum for upcoming schoolyear.

With participation of UNHCR Representative on behalf of UNHCR & OSCE, in October, contracts were awarded in Ub and in Belgrade for apartments purchased for 35 (ex-Yugoslav) refugee families, under the **Regional Housing Programme** (RHP). On 26 Oct, keys to newly built apartments were awarded to 20 refugee families in Smederevo.



UNHCR partner Danish Refugee Council (DRC) established a breast self-examination corner in Krnjača Asylum Centre, @DRC, Oct 2021

UNHCR Serbia is grateful for the support of:

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