

Serbia

February 2022

Serbia hosts **25,500** refugees, including from the former Yugoslavia, **196,000** internally displaced persons (IDPs) and some **2,100** persons at risk of statelessness.

Persons in need of international protection are supported in accessing asylum and local integration. Most displaced from within the region have found solutions.

UNHCR continues to support the Government in strengthening the national asylum system to provide protection and viable solutions to refugees and asylum-seekers.

POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Refugees	25,532
Asylum-seekers	140
Internally displaced persons	196,140
Stateless persons	2,106
Total population of concern	227,776

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Croatia	17,334	Iran	27
Bosnia and Herzegovina	7,996	Burundi	23
Libya	46	Somalia	15

*Data source: UNHCR 2021 Mid-Year Statistical Report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: UNHCR has advocated for inclusion of refugees and asylum-seekers in the national vaccination scheme. Ninety refugees and migrants in government-run centres have been vaccinated against COVID-19.

Communication with Communities: UNHCR and partners assisted refugees and asylum-seekers in private accommodation with applications for vaccination, cultural mediation and interpretation as needed, and continued efforts to ensure their access to health care and medicines. UNHCR and partners inform those in government centres about COVID-19 immunization during asylum counselling.

[COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment – UNCT Serbia](#)
[COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan – UNCT Serbia](#)

HIGHLIGHTS

“What They Took With Them” in Serbian

On 30 November, “What They Took With Them” was **premiered** in its **Serbian version** at Yugoslav Film Archive cinema in Belgrade. The Serbian version was produced by **UNHCR High Profile Supporter Branka Katic** and others.

“Welcome to My Country”

In December, UNHCR announced **winners of the national high school contest “Welcome to My Country”**. It included over 300 multimedia works by students with messages of solidarity with refugees and common humanity.

60,407 new arrivals registered

in government-run centres for refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants in 2021, compared to 58,103 in 2020.

14 recognitions

Fourteen persons were awarded international protection in Serbia in 2021 (23 in 2020), totalling 208 since 2008.

NIKOLA KOVAČEVIĆ, 2021 WINNER OF NANSSEN REFUGEE AWARD FOR EUROPE



Kovačević, 32, has devoted his life to helping refugees and asylum-seekers in their hour of need. He has represented 30 per cent of all asylum-seekers granted protection in Serbia. Read more about Nikola Kovačević [here](#).

Key Priorities

- **Protection outreach:** Data collection focuses on identifying persons with international protection needs and/or specific needs so they can be referred to asylum authorities and specialized agencies.
- **Access to territory:** UNHCR supports authorities in capacity-building for protection-sensitive migration management in line with international standards.
- **Asylum procedures:** UNHCR monitors asylum procedures and decisions and implements the Quality Initiative, including enhanced use of country-of-origin information, ensuring gender- and child-sensitive asylum procedures and provision of free legal aid.
- **Solutions:** Advocating for the realization of Serbia's solutions-related pledges at the 2019 Global Refugee Forum (GRF). Exploring housing solutions for refugees and asylum-seekers.
- **Inclusion & integration:** Support the integration of international protection holders, through different interventions, including cash-based interventions, livelihoods, language classes, etc., in cooperation with the private sector and civil society organizations.
- **Promoting social cohesion:** Through joint activities with the host community, local self-governments and the private sector, integration in primary and secondary education, vocational training and local employment.
- **Capacity-building:** Judicial engagement and capacity development of the judiciary to interpret and apply relevant international legal principles.

Working with Partners

- UNHCR Serbia enjoys close cooperation with the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, of Internal

Affairs, of Public Administration and Local Self-Government (MPALSG), as well as with local authorities. Partnership agreements are in place with 11 NGO partners and a number of academic institutions.

- **External engagement:** UNHCR acts as a catalyst of changes and advancement of the asylum system, supporting the national authorities, and working with civil society partners, donors, stakeholders, the private sector and refugees themselves.

GRF – progress on pledges



- Out of five pledges presented on behalf of Serbia at the December 2019 Global Refugee Forum (GRF) Conference by the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM), four are fully realized, including those related to integration and education, while the one related to early warning and emergency preparedness is in progress.

Statelessness

- The MPALSG, the Office of the Ombudsman and the UNHCR signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness in Serbia, linked to the [#IBelong Campaign](#), and valid for 1,000 days, from 8 February 2022 until 4 November 2024 (the end of #IBelong Campaign).
- Eighty persons had their nationality confirmed/granted in 2021, with legal assistance from UNHCR's partner Praxis.

UNHCR Presence in Serbia

Staff:

33 National Staff
 3 International Staff
 11 Affiliate Workforce

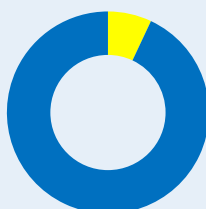
Offices:

1 Country Office in Belgrade
 1 Field Unit in Preševo

Financial information (22 February 2022)

Financial requirements
USD 9.3 M

Funding gap
 93%
8.6 M



Funded
 7%
0.7 M

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