

# Serbia

February 2023

UNHCR **works with the government** on the **mixed movements of people**, while also supporting solutions for the displaced and **reducing the risk of statelessness**.

UNHCR supports the government in **strengthening the national asylum system** and advocates for inclusion and local integration of the people in need of international protection.

Out of 537,937 in 1996, **25,331 refugees** from the former Yugoslavia **were still in need of a durable solution in 2022**.

## UNHCR POPULATION STATISTICS AS OF MID-2022\*

Refugees	<b>26,318</b>
Asylum-seekers	<b>235</b>
Stateless persons	<b>2,037</b>
Internally displaced persons	<b>196,066</b>

### Top three countries of origin\*

Refugees		Asylum-seekers	
Croatia	<b>17,334</b>	Burundi	<b>115</b>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	<b>7,997</b>	Iran	<b>20</b>
Ukraine	<b>767</b>	Cuba	<b>16</b>

\*UNHCR 2022 Mid-Year Statistical Report

## UKRAINE REFUGEE SITUATION RESPONSE

According to data available as of mid-February 2023, **1,228** refugees from Ukraine were registered for temporary protection in Serbia.

**UNHCR and its partners** assist refugees with legal counselling and legal representation, including on temporary protection, employment, and psychosocial, psychological and psychiatric assistance. UNHCR also organizes Serbian language classes for children and adults.

UNHCR, in partnership with IKEA supported furnishing of the asylum centre in Vranje, which houses some 70 refugees from Ukraine, in order to improve the living conditions.

UNHCR and partners also provide information through a dedicated [HELP page](#), which is frequently updated, and have distributed some 8,000 copies of the "[Information for Ukrainian Refugees Arriving in Serbia](#)" flyer in Ukrainian, Russian, English and Serbian.

A series of events involving refugee children and adults as well as the local community are organised on a weekly basis.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Family reunification

15 refugees from Syria, including women and children, were reunited with their families in the Netherlands and Austria in 2022, through a concerted effort of UNHCR and partners Crisis Response and Policy Centre (CRPC), the Humanitarian Centre for Integration and Tolerance (HCIT), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Serbian Ministry of Interior and embassies.

### Asylum procedures

30 asylum applicants were granted international protection in 2022, 20 with subsidiary protection and 10 with asylum. Since 2008, when Serbia's Law on Asylum came into effect, 238 people have been granted international protection.

### New arrivals doubled in 2022

The government registered 124,127 new arrivals in 2022, compared to 60,407 in 2021.



## PROMOTION OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

Seeking to promote refugee inclusion and integration, UNHCR has been engaging with sports organisations. In April 2022, UNHCR and its beneficiaries participated in the Belgrade Marathon for the fifth time.

## Key Priorities

- **Access to territory, registration, personal documents and services:** Activities of UNHCR and its partners aim at ensuring that refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced people (IDPs) and persons at risk of statelessness benefit from an improved and systematically implemented legal framework, thus being able to access rights in line with international standards. UNHCR ensures that people in need of international protection have access to territory and asylum procedures as well as protection and assistance in safe reception conditions.
- **Fair and fast asylum procedures:** UNHCR aims to foster the development of the national asylum system by working with responsible decision-making authorities to increase capacities through training, exchanges with other countries, as well as support for expedient policy-related and legal measures.
- **Child protection:** UNHCR supports the authorities to place unaccompanied children under guardianship, receive medical and other care, be accommodated adequately and receive education.
- **Durable solutions and opportunities for education and employment:** UNHCR provides access to education, upskilling, employment and financial services for asylum-seekers and refugees, as well as inclusion in local communities, and durable solutions for the most vulnerable IDPs.
- **Community Engagement:** Inclusion of refugees, asylum-seekers, IDPs and persons at risk of statelessness in community activities promotes inclusion and peaceful coexistence. UNHCR focuses on promoting their human capital and on linking them with the local communities.

## Working with Partners

- Following joint efforts by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) and UNHCR, the first two refugees in Serbia received their “Passport of Competencies”, which supports the employability of refugees with little or no formal education or employment.
- **IKEA “Skills for Employment” programme:** each year, up to 15 refugees are selected for a three-month internship in IKEA. Since 2021, 21 people have participated in the programme.
- UNHCR co-produced with the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government a [video](#) on risks stemming from being statelessness, featuring UNHCR High Profile Supporter actress Branka Katic.
- UNHCR, partner IDEAS and the Swiss Development Cooperation jointly developed a handbook “[Change the Story - Ethical Reporting on Refugees and Asylum-Seekers](#)” (version in Serbian).

## Statelessness

- **#IBelong:** Over the past decade, Serbia has significantly decreased and prevented statelessness, by reducing the number of stateless people from 30,000 in 2010 to 2,000 today. Through Praxis support, UNHCR’s partner, 71 people were granted Serbian nationality in 2022.

## UNHCR Presence in Serbia

### Staff:

42 National Staff  
 4 International Staff

### Offices:

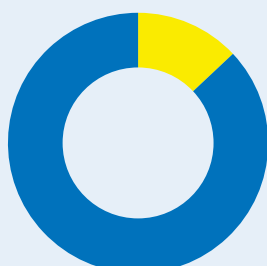
1 Country Office in Belgrade  
 1 Field Office in Preševo

## Financial information (February 2023)

### Financial requirements

USD 9.6 M

Funding gap  
 87%  
 8.4 M



Funded  
 13%  
 1.2 M

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As well as for the generous contributions from private individuals and the private sector.