

Republic of North Macedonia

September 2021

The UNHCR office in North Macedonia was **established in 1993** and has been working closely with the government and civil sector for the protection of persons under its mandate.

Estimated arrivals in mixed movements in 2021 is 13,110 with only 43 asylum claims submitted. UNHCR advocates for **access to asylum and solutions** for those in need of international protection.

UNHCR works with authorities to fulfil the **GRF pledge** on finding a durable solution for the 257 displaced from Kosovo¹ who remain without legal status after more than 20 years

POPULATION OF CONCERN*

Refugees	314
Asylum-seekers	21
Stateless persons	558

TOP THREE COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN*

Refugees		Asylum-seeker	
Serbia and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999)...	276	Afghanistan	6
Syrian Arab Rep.	17	Serbia and Kosovo: S/RES/1244 (1999)...	5
Afghanistan	6	Turkey	5

*Data source: UNHCR 2020 Global Trends Report and UNHCR [data finder platform](#)

¹ Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Advocacy: Asylum-seekers and stateless persons are not included in the government vaccination scheme; UNHCR continues advocating for inclusion of all persons of concern and works with partners to make this happen despite the administrative hurdles that prevent their inclusion.

Communication with Communities: UNHCR operates a 24/7 helpline to maintain direct contact with refugees, asylum-seekers, and persons at risk of statelessness. UNHCR introduced a dedicated email address, as well as a special section of the UNHCR HELP [website to address protection concerns](#).

Health: As part of the UNHCR regional project funded under the EU Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), UNHCR furnished reception and transit centres with equipment and established Safe Counselling rooms.

HIGHLIGHTS



To accelerate the Agenda 2030 and the Global Compact on Refugees, UNHCR North Macedonia developed a **multi-year and forward-looking strategy** applying Foresight methods, leveraging whole-of-society engagement and novel approaches to finding solutions and advancing protection in the country.

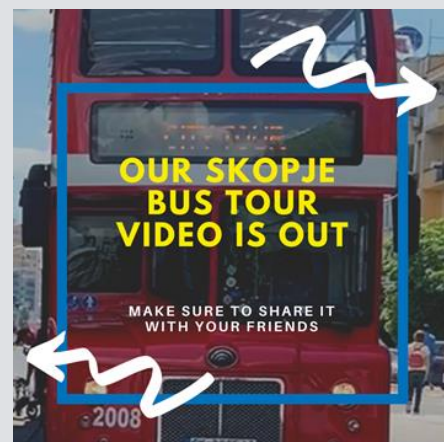


To move the Global Compact on Refugees forward, 88 students from 35 countries participated in the second edition of the **Summer School on Refugees and Migration**, hosted by the Iustinianus Primus Law Faculty, UNHCR and the International Institute of Humanitarian Law.



To **improve the public narrative** on refugees and stateless persons UNHCR led the development of the first ever Communication Strategy for Public Interest based on a community engagement approach. The strategy is meant to guide all relevant stakeholders on communicating about refugees and stateless people.

BUS TOUR OF THE CAPITAL WITH REFUGEES



UNHCR in partnership with the City Red Cross of Skopje and the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association organized a bus tour of Skopje for the refugees and asylum seekers in the country.

Key Priorities

- **Establish protection sensitive border management:** UNHCR advocates with the government for improved identification and referral of persons in need of international protection in mixed movements to ensure they have access to asylum procedures in full respect of international, regional and national legislation.
- **Improve the quality of the asylum procedure:** UNHCR advocates with the government for
 - prioritised decision-making on manifestly well-founded applications and granting international protection based on the merit of the case;
 - judicial review of administrative decisions to take in-merit decisions and to increase efficiency of the asylum procedure; and
 - State-financed provision of quality interpretation services and quality and free-of-charge legal aid, at all stages of the asylum procedure.
- **Foster solutions:** UNHCR advocates for:
 - Sustainable legal solutions for the remaining Kosovo (UN SC 1244 (1999)) refugees, in line with the country's 2019 Global Refugee Forum pledge.
 - Provision of state-provided integration services for persons with international protection status.
 - Socio-economic inclusion of asylum-seekers.
 - Simplified naturalization procedures for refugees.
- UNHCR supports authorities and partners in their **preparedness for adequate humanitarian and protection response** in case of a refugee influx; in regular risk analysis and monitoring; and development of a contingency plan.
- UNHCR **supports the government in developing and implementing the forward-looking National Migration Policy** ensuring that protection-sensitive approach is introduced as well as other protection safeguards.

- **Improve the public narrative** on refugee and stateless integration by fostering new attitudes and behaviours in host communities. Broaden the platform of stakeholders to combat misinformation.

Working with Partners

- To advance the protection agenda in the country, UNHCR engages with a vast array of stakeholders and builds new partnerships to advocate for the rights of people under UNHCR's mandate.
- UNHCR actively supports the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework UNSDCF 2021-2025 in partnership with the Government, civil society, and UN Agencies. Within such framework UNHCR:
 - Together with IOM and UNFPA explores innovative ways to improve migration management and refugee narrative under the joint project funded by the Migration **MPTF**.
 - Pilots, together with UNDP, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Appraisal Tool for Forced Displacement and Statelessness - one of few such examples globally.

Statelessness

- North Macedonia is signatory to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on Reduction of Statelessness. However, a systemic solution for ending statelessness has not yet been set up.

UNHCR Presence in North Macedonia

Staff:

23 National Staff *

2 International Staff

*including 7 UNOPS and 2 TA

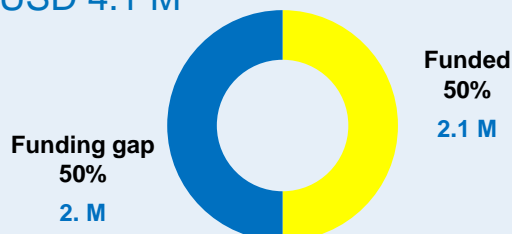
Offices:

1 Representation Office in Skopje

1 Field Unit in Gevgelija

Financial information (28 September 2021)

Financial requirements

USD 4.1 M


UNHCR is grateful to the donors of unearmarked and softly earmarked contributions to the 2021 global programmes. Donors of USD 10 million or more are:

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UNHCR North Macedonia is grateful to the donors to its 2021 programme: **Migration MPTF**