

KEY FLOW MONITORING POINTS REPORT:

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA – UNA SANA CANTON

01 SEPTEMBER – 15 NOVEMBER 2022

OVERVIEW

Migration levels in the Western Balkans now exceed pre-pandemic levels. To better understand migratory movements along the Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR), IOM Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) established key flow monitoring points (FMPs)¹ in the Una-Sana Canton (USC) in the north of the country on the border with Croatia. According to the latest available data from the Ministry of Security (MoS) of BiH, 19,251 migrants entered the country from 1 January to 15 November 2022 in an attempt to reach the European Union (EU). The number of migrants registered on arrival on a weekly basis has been steadily increasing since January 2022. In contrast, the number of migrants registered in temporary reception centres (TRC) remains relatively stable, which indicates a high turnover rate of migrants as most migrants are rapidly transiting through the country. This exercise is therefore critical to analyse migration drivers and trends resulting from visa-free regimes, networks of human traffickers and/or smugglers, but also connections with friends and/or family.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This is a highly mobile population; 92 per cent had been in BiH for less than a month.
- More than one-third of respondents (34%) entered BiH with a facilitator.
- Most of respondents (84%) reported having been pushed back to BiH at least once. 96% of those who had tried to cross the border into the EU stated that they would try again in the future.
- The main nationalities were Afghans, Burundians, Pakistanis and Libyans.
- The top countries of intended destination are Germany (33%), Italy (31%), France (24%) and Belgium (9%).
- The social networks most frequently used by respondents to facilitate their journey to the EU were Facebook (95%), WhatsApp (72.2%), Viber (38.8%), Instagram (32.3%), TikTok (9.6%), and Twitter (0.2%).
- Almost all (96%) of the migrants had registered with authorities in BiH.

Between 1 September and 15 November, IOM conducted interviews with 403 migrants in five key locations (Flow Monitoring Points or 'FMPs') in three municipalities in USC (Bihać, Cazin and Velika Kladuša) at the border with the EU. Overall, adult male migrants represented 96 per cent of the sample².

Compared with the previous round, there was a significant drop in Pakistani nationals from 41.6 per cent to 11.2 per cent. Nationals of Burundi had visa free access to Serbia until 20 October 2022 and are therefore the second most represented nationality.



Figure 1. The main travel routes and the municipalities where interviews took place. Thicker arrows indicate more active routes

Migrants are highly mobile and tend to transit through BiH in only a few days. Over half the migrants (54%) had been in BiH for less than two weeks prior to the interview and 92 per cent had been there for less than a month.

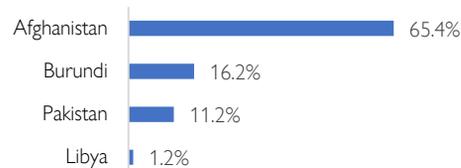


Figure 2. Main country of origin of interviewed migrants



Picture 1. DTM teams interviewing migrants in FMPs in USC

1. DTM's global flow monitoring methodology aims to identify areas prone to internal, cross-border and regional migration. Mobility area assessments are conducted at the national level. DTM teams then collect information at the local level to identify key transit points. Enumerators collect data from key informants at the flow monitoring points. Key informants may be transport staff, customs officers, boat operators or migrants themselves. Data is collected through a basic form combined with direct observations.

2. As the population surveyed is highly mobile, categories such as women and children are less likely to be found in the selected locations.

3. Upon entering the territory of BiH, migrants are registered by the Service for Foreigners' Affairs (SFA) within the MoS, most of them expressing their intention to seek asylum, following which request a certificate (white paper) is issued. The certificate provides for a 14-day window, during which people must formally submit their asylum application and undergo registration with the Asylum Sector (SA) of the MoS. After 14 days, if the asylum application is not presented, they become irregular.

Overall, 84.3 per cent of the respondents had already attempted to cross the border into the EU from BiH.

Almost all migrants (98%) who reported having attempted a border crossing claimed to have been pushed back⁵ to BiH, with the remaining stating that they had not managed to cross due to route closure.

Pushbacks were not a deterrent for future crossings with 96.2 per cent of those who reported having tried to cross the border to the EU stated they would try again.

More than 10 per cent of the respondents said they traveled with a facilitator to enter the country.

The primary needs of migrants are directly related to the fact that many people have travelled long distances. Most people have very clear basic needs relating to food and water, clothing, use of washing facilities, shelter, to restock before attempting to cross the border into the EU.

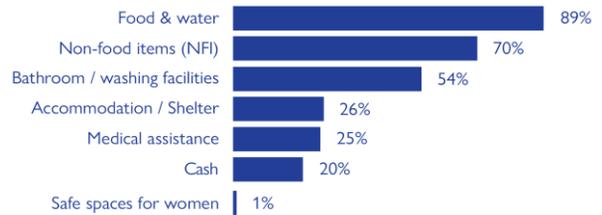


Figure 4. Main needs reported by interviewees

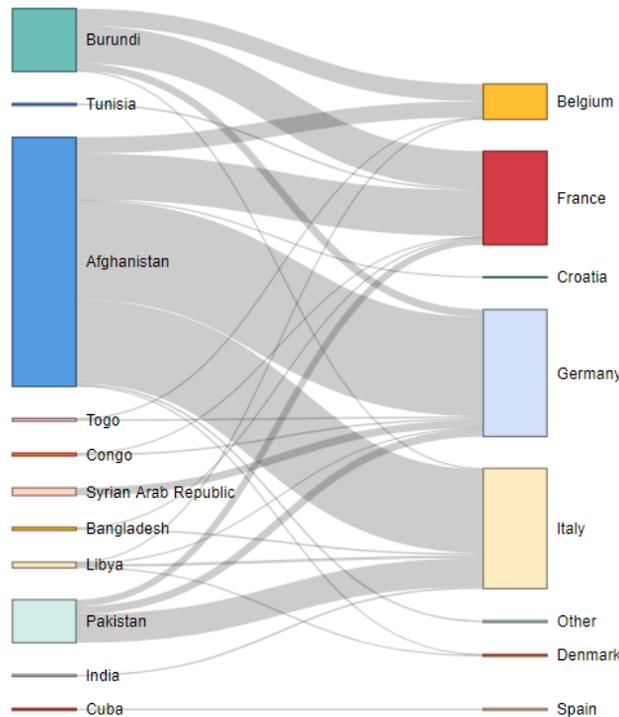


Figure 3. Intended country of destination by nationality

Germany (33%) was the top intended country of destination, followed by Italy (31%), France (24%) and Belgium (9%). Figure 3 shows provides a breakdown of the intended countries of destination by nationality. Among the reasons given for choosing these countries, most respondents said that they wanted to go there for the appealing socio-economic conditions (66%), because these were suggested by relatives or friends (23%), or because of perceived ease of access to asylum procedures (7%).

In general, migrants are well informed about routes, locations of TRCs and places where they can seek support along their journeys. Information on social media and instant messaging platform can be disseminated rapidly and widely among migrant networks. Survey respondents were therefore asked, which sources of information they used to facilitate their journey toward the European Union.

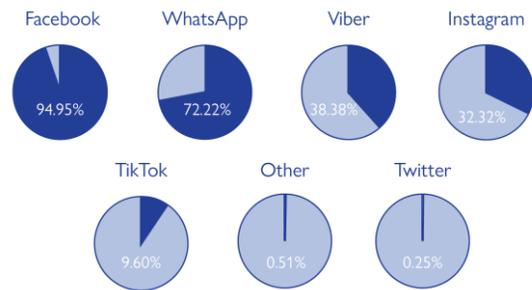


Figure 5. Main sources of information used by interviewees

Almost all migrants interviewed (96%) had registered with authorities in BiH.⁵ The majority (93%) of those who were not registered, intend to do so in the future. Almost all the respondents (98%) were registered in one of the existing temporary reception centres (TRC) in BiH, with 61 per cent having been registered in TRC Lipa, 34 per cent in TRC Blažuj and 2 per cent in TRC Borići and TRC Ušivak.

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)

5. Pushbacks are expulsions of migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees from the territory of one state to the territory of another state without regard for the individual's circumstances and right to seek asylum. Pushbacks are prohibited under international and EU law.

The map (Figure 3) is for illustrative purposes only. Representations and the use of boundaries and geographical names on this map may include errors and do not imply any judgment on the legal status of a territory, nor official recognition or acceptance of these boundaries by IOM.

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