

**2,558** migrants and asylum seekers assisted with accommodation in the official reception facilities in BiH

**2,512** beds available in the reception facilities in BiH

**1,009** estimated migrants and asylum-seekers outside of centres\* in BiH

**4** Temporary Reception Centres fully operational in BiH\*\*

**1,149** Assisted Voluntary Returns since 2018 **147** in 2021



FIRST REGIONAL MEETING ON ALTERNATIVES TO IMMIGRATION DETENTION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS HELD IN BELGRADE, SERBIA © IOM 2021

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

On 15 and 16 September, the first ‘Regional Meeting on Alternatives to Immigration Detention in the Western Balkans’ was held in Belgrade, Serbia, to elevate discussions on immigration detention and alternatives to the regional level in the Western Balkans and enable the exchange of knowledge with relevant national and international experts. Main speakers included the IOM Sub-Regional Coordinator for the Western Balkans and Chief of Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Laura Lungarotti, and the Special Representative on Migration and Refugees of the Council of Europe, Drahošlav Štefánek. The Head of the Service for Foreigners’ Affairs (SFA) Department for Readmission, Acceptance and Accommodation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and the Expert Associate for Security and Support to Deportations also participated in the meetings.

From 6 to 10 September, a delegation of the Council of Europe’s Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) carried out an evaluation visit to BiH, as part of the third evaluation round of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The focus of the evaluation is on trafficking victims’ access to justice and effective remedies. The delegation also met representatives of the European Union Special Representative in BiH, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and visited Temporary Reception Centre (TRC) Ušivak.

On 16 September, nine migrants from Ušivak participated in a social cohesion event organized by the association “MOST” in Jablanica where they prepared traditional meals from their

\*Estimated number recorded by IOM DTM on 31 August 2021

\*\*Pending the official closure of TRC Sedra by the BiH Council of Ministers

## AFGHANISTAN UPDATE

There are currently 722 migrants from Afghanistan accommodated in TRCs in BiH, including 607 men, 42 women, and 73 children, which represents 28.4 per cent of the migrants assisted in TRCs. According to the data collected through the August DTM exercise, approximately 469 migrants from Afghanistan are living outside of formal reception facilities. Between 1 January and 15 September 2021, it is estimated that 634,800 people have been internally displaced by conflict in Afghanistan\*. The impact this crisis may have in the Western Balkans is difficult to predict. IOM is closely monitoring the situation in Afghanistan and along the Eastern Mediterranean Route (EMR) and will provide weekly updates on the presence of Afghans in BiH and the Western Balkans.

\*(source: OCHA)

countries of origin, and presented the products created in the Fashion Corner.

On 17 September, the State Secretary Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Vendelín Leitner visited TRC Ušivak. Accompanied by HE ambassador of the Slovak Republic to BiH, Martin Kačo, SFA Deputy Director, SFA Head of cabinet, MoS advisor, EU Senior Advisor to the BiH Minister of Security, and the IOM Migration Response Coordinator. The delegation was briefed on the services and activities available in the center and provided an overview of the situation in all TRCs in BiH.

## CONTACTS

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## IOM RESPONSE

### SHELTER AND NON-FOOD ITEMS (NFI)

In preparation for the winter, the IOM maintenance staff have undertaken general inspections of the heating systems. In TRC Ušivak, the IOM registration office was connected to the electrical system. In TRC Borići, repairs were made to nine convector heaters and one oil radiator.

The painting of the walls in TRC Borići continued, notably the hallway and the rooms on the third floor, as well as the hairdresser's salon. The shelves in the salon were repaired, and the hallway on the ground floor was pressure washed. Moreover, bushes were cleared near the fire escape road to improve the visibility and security.

In TRC Blažuj the benches made by the IOM technical service are ready for use in the social corner. Door lock cylinders installed without Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) authorization were also removed.

Finally, in TRC Miral, the fence was repaired and electrical issues in the outdoor kitchen were fixed. Two LED lights were installed in the area behind the unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) zone, and one LED panel was installed for use around the accommodation container.

**# of NFIs distributed: 9,879**

**# of people assisted with NFIs: 1,059**

### WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

During the reporting period, IOM assisted a total of 683 persons with WASH services in BiH, while multiple repairs were undertaken in order to ensure access to clean and safe reception facilities.

In TRC Blažuj, IOM carried out a thorough disinfection operation of the hangars used for accommodation. Based on the intense efforts undertaken over the past few weeks, the bedbug problem has been ruled out. Bushes were cleared near the fire escape road to ensure visibility and repairs were made to nine convector heaters and one oil radiator.

In TRC Borići, besides the regular activities such as waste disposal, IOM maintenance and cleaning team completed the TRC cleaning and disinfection of all buildings, hallways, isolation units and toilets. The main plateau was also cleaned, and several small repairs were done throughout the week.

In TRC Ušivak, 127 persons, out of which 59 mothers and 69 children (29 males and 30 females), benefitted from the Mother and Baby Wash Unit (MBWU).

In TRC Miral, several repairs were done on door locks, showers, as well as LED and power panels.

**# of people assisted with laundry services: 683**

**# of people assisted by the IOM MBU: 127**

### FOOD AND NUTRITION

During the reporting period, IOM distributed a total

of 28,896 meals in all TRCs in BiH, and the Outreach Mobile team distributed 207 sweets and 82 loaves of bread to migrants during their visits outside of the centres.

In TRC Blažuj, various service providers continued to support the preparation and distribution of food. In TRC Borići, the IOM food and NFI assistants organized a distribution of sweets during lunch for children under 18, including for children temporarily sheltered in the preventive isolation area. In TRC Ušivak, IOM assisted 14 vulnerable or disabled persons and delivered food directly to their accommodation unit. A total of 396 kids' meals were served to 89 children for breakfast. IOM continues to support the MBWU with food distribution, and over the reporting period, 54 juice boxes, 48 litres of milk, and 32 fruit purees were distributed.

**# of meals distributed: 28,896**

### CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT (CCCM)

In TRC Blažuj, the IOM CCCM team and its partners agreed to modify the use of one large building to accommodate minors who are temporarily staying in the TRC, in order to create an environment adapted to UASCs and facilitate the provision of assistance. The Red Cross also informed the CCCM team that they will donate blankets to migrants in Blažuj and Ušivak. Another mine-awareness session was also organized by IOM, with the support of UNFPA and DRC.

In TRC Ušivak, a follow-up meeting was organized to discuss the inclusion of children migrants in local schools. Parents, as well as representatives of UNICEF/World Vision, directors of schools located in Pazarić and Ilidža and representatives of the Ministry of Education were present. As soon as an agreement is finalized, the children will start attending school regularly. Starting in October, children will also get language lessons, which will allow them to access their integration pathways in school.

In TRC Miral, the new "Info Screen" has been installed in the restaurant. The screen will showcase information prepared by the IOM Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) team, with descriptions of the services available in the TRC. Additionally, photos of IOM staff with descriptions of their role and responsibilities will be displayed, to help residents know to whom to refer to when they have questions or need assistance.



## OUTREACH

The IOM Outreach Mobile team provided information and assistance to 968 migrants identified outside of TRCs, in 29 locations in Una-Sana Canton (USC), including abandoned houses, squats, and transit points. Migrants were identified in 15 locations, while 14 locations were found empty; 121 of the migrants identified accepted to be accommodated and were transported to TRCs. Eight referrals were also made for medical support.

A total of 102 families with 387 members (including 190 accompanied children) were identified; 11 of them (34 persons including 12 children) accepted transportation and accommodation to TRC Borići, whereas 2 (5 persons with one child) were transported and accommodated in TRC Ušivak. Additionally, 21 UASC were identified, with 17 declining accommodation and 4 being transported to Reception Centre in Duje. No single women were identified.

One non-violent pushback was reported during the reporting period, by a group of 22 adult males from Pakistan; 18 of them accepted accommodation and transportation to PC Lipa, while 4 declined. In addition, 60 more adult men accepted accommodation in provisional camp (PC) Lipa, after which the team coordinated referrals to additional support services. A total of 411 migrants were provided with Psychological First Aid (PFA).

Finally, the mobile smartphone charging stations donated by Catch a Smile (an NGO from Luxembourg), are now available for migrants in outreach locations in the Bihać and Velika Kladuša areas.



IOM STAFF PROVIDING ASSISTANCE AND NFI TO A MIGRANT FAMILY UPON THEIR ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION IN TRC UŠIVAK © IOM 2021

## MAIN GAPS

In the short term, the top priority remains the need for additional funds to provide food and NFI to migrants living in TRCs and those sleeping outside of TRCs. Funds are also critically needed to cover for repairs and running costs of TRCs, particularly in Blažuj. As winter approaches, IOM and its partners are exploring ways to complement funding to ensure preparedness and response to emergencies, including in light of the ongoing Afghanistan crisis.

In the medium and long term, the main gaps to be addressed relate to the capacities of the authorities in the areas of registration, screening, and identification of vulnerable migrants, as well as management of reception facilities. Capacity-building remains a priority to progress towards the overarching goal of ensuring state ownership of the emergency response in BiH. Additionally, IOM works to support data systematization, and return and reintegration.



CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE WORKS AT NEW SITE LIPA © IOM 2021 © IOM 2021

## ASISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION (AVRR)

IOM's AVRR teams are active in all open TRCs, including PC Lipa, and in outreach locations, to promote migrants' rights and provide information and advice to migrants interested in returning to their countries of origin (CoO). IOM and UNHCR continue to jointly disseminate information on AVRR, asylum procedures and assistance available in TRCs in locations in the USC. Between 11 and 17 September, the IOM AVRR team reached a total of 178 migrants (65 in the centres and 113 in outside locations), and a total of 104 in-depth counselling sessions were held. Additionally, a total of five migrants returned to their Country of Origin: India (1), Bangladesh (1), Iran (1), and Pakistan (2).

### IOM ACTIVITIES ARE SUPPORTED BY :



Austrian Development Agency

German Federal Agency for Technical Relief



MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC



SLUŽBA ZA POSLOVE SA STRANCI  
SERVICE FOR FOREIGNERS' AFFAIRS



MINISTARSTVO SIGURNOSTI BOSNE I HERCEGOVINE  
MINISTRY OF SECURITY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy

