



**Save the Children**

**REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS AT THE BALKANS ROUTE**

# **REGIONAL OVERVIEW**

**JANUARY-MARCH 2023**

Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub  
Data and Trends Analysis

# Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub Data and Trends Analysis

# IMPRESSUM

Every child has the right to a future. Save the Children works in North West Balkans and worldwide to give children a healthy start in life and the chance to learn and be safe. We do whatever it takes to get children the things they need – every day and in times of crisis.

## Acknowledgements

This report was written by Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub, working within Save the Children North West Balkans Country Office. The report would not have been possible without valuable inputs from Save the Children Romania (<http://salvaticopiii.ro>), Save the Children Albania (<https://albania.savethechildren.net>), Save the Children Kosovo (<https://kosovo.savethechildren.net/>) and our partners in Serbia Centre for Youth Integration (<http://cim.org.rs>).

This project was made possible through the generous contributions of Save the Children Italy, Save the Children Spain and Save the Children Norway

## Published by:

Save the Children in North West Balkans  
Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub  
Kralja Milana 21, 11000 Belgrade  
Serbia  
<https://nwb.savethechildren.net>  
[bmdh.sci@savethechildren.org](mailto:bmdh.sci@savethechildren.org)

This publication may be used free of charge for the purposes of advocacy, campaigning, education and research, provided that the source is acknowledged in full.

## Author:

Milena Manojlović, Research Officer,  
[milena.manojlovic@savethechildren.org](mailto:milena.manojlovic@savethechildren.org).

## Design:

Nikola Lazarević

## Cover photo:

Marija Piroški

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Greece</b> .....	<b>4</b>	<b>Serbia</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Bulgaria</b> .....	<b>5</b>	<b>Romania</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>North Macedonia</b> .....	<b>6</b>	<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Albania</b> .....	<b>7</b>	<b>Croatia</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Montenegro</b> .....	<b>8</b>	<b>About the project</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>Kosovo*</b> .....	<b>9</b>		

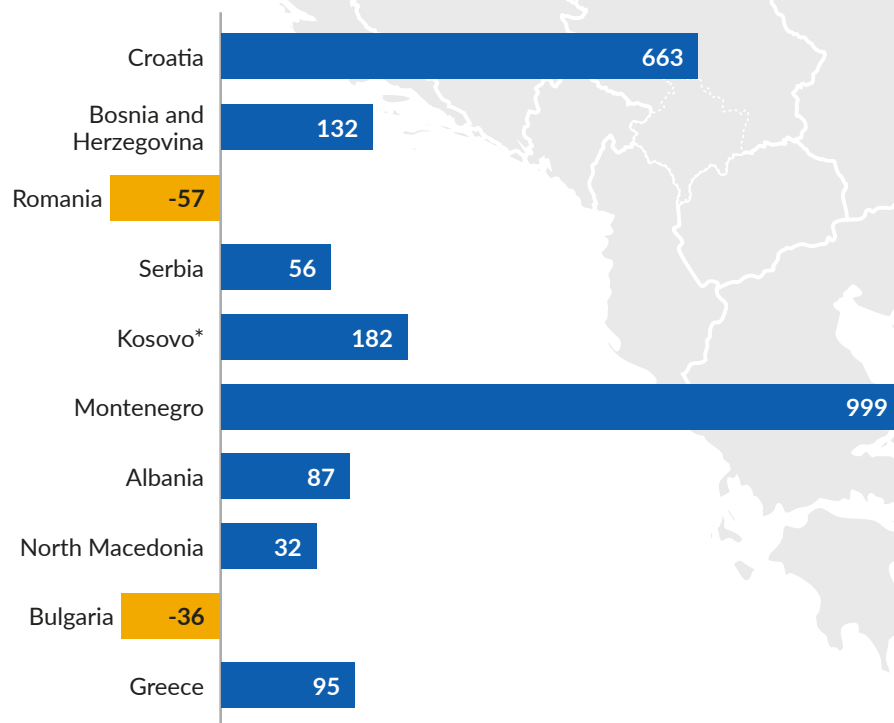
*\*All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.*

# KEY REGIONAL TRENDS

In the first quarter of 2023, the number of registered refugees and migrants continued to rise in most countries along the Balkans route, except for Romania and Bulgaria, where trends of decrease - first registered in the winter of 2022 – also continued.

Compared to the same period last year, 57% and 36% decreases are recorded in Romania and Bulgaria, while increases of 999% and 663% are noticed in Montenegro and Croatia.<sup>1</sup>

**Comparison of 2022 and 2023 - percentages of increase/decrease in the number of new arrivals/detainees/asylum claims in first three months**



Potential reasons for variations in the number of migrants and refugees in countries along the route are many. Countries are counting “new arrivals” using different methodologies. Some countries publish information on refugees and migrants who are being intercepted by the police forces, while others count and report on the new asylum seekers. Also, the capacities to register people differ. Moreover, countries periodically intensify their border controls, relying on unlawful practices such as violent pushbacks, which leads to shifting the route to alternative passes that seem safer. The decline in the number of refugees and migrants in Bulgaria could be attributed to such developments. Partners in daily contact with refugees and migrants in Serbia point out increasing complaints that Bulgarian authorities are being violent towards migrants and refugees.

Nevertheless, the general trend of a rise in the number of refugees and migrants that marked 2022 continued in the first quarter of 2023. Besides the increase in numbers of refugees and migrants, they are transiting very fast through the region since they generally spend a short time in each country before crossing the next border.

Besides rising numbers, high turnover rate, and continuous violence perpetrated by authorities and smugglers, two new developments marked the first three months of 2023 on the Balkans route. First is the increased number of readmissions to Bosnia and Herzegovina from Croatia. Second is rise in the number of Moroccan citizens using the route.

<sup>1</sup> The presented statistic does not include displaced Ukrainians.

# Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub

## Data and Trends Analysis

### KEY REGIONAL TRENDS

Readmissions have taken place since the current readmission agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia was signed in 2011, however not as massively as in 2023. What is concerning are indications that the agreement is being misused, basically serving as a way further to normalise non-arrival and non-admission behaviours towards refugees and migrants. Readmission included not only rejected asylum seekers but served as a path to deny the right to seek asylum in Croatia, the procedure itself was apparently carried out in a form that directly endangered involved refugees and migrants, especially unaccompanied and separated children which are the most vulnerable sub-group of all.

Both protection of refugees and the safe management of migration depend on compliance with laws and procedures. In that sense, the increasing “grey area” and gradual normalisation of unlawful practices on the external borders of the EU are particularly worrying. Especially keeping in mind that the New Pact on Migration and Asylum proposes a “pre-entry screening procedure, allowing national authorities at external borders to channel irregular third-country nationals to the appropriate procedure, i.e. asylum or return procedures.”<sup>2</sup> Protecting the rights of refugees and migrants in the EU is already inseparable from the practices developed in the neighbouring non-member countries, such as Western Balkans countries. It will be so even more in the future.

The second trend is the increasing number of Moroccans registered in countries along the Balkans route. Despite the absence of war or extensive political instability that leads to violence, some data suggests that an increasing number of young Moroccans under 30 desire to leave the country, primarily due to unemployment, economic difficulties, educational opportunities, and family reunification.<sup>3</sup>

While Morocco is one of the crucial partners of the EU and Spain in managing the Western Mediterranean route, one of the routes for migrants and refugees from Central and Sub-Saharan Africa where many children and adults lost lives or reported violations of their rights, it is also a country of origin. But policies focused on the externalisation and containment of refugees and migrants cannot provide sustainable solutions. Workable solutions must be focused on minimising the risks for refugees and migrants, increasing the capacities and prosperity of host/partner countries, and providing protection for children on the move.

<sup>2</sup> European Parliament, Screening of third-country nationals at the EU's external borders, available at [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS\\_BRI\(2020\)659346](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2020)659346)

<sup>3</sup> BTI Transformation Index, Morocco Country Report 2022, available at <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/MAR>



**3,722**  
refugees and  
migrants arrived  
in Greece in the  
first trimester

Approximately 22,704 displaced people from Ukraine – including 6,610 children – received Temporary protection cards until the end of March.<sup>8</sup>

In the same period, Greek authorities made 12,177 first-instance asylum decisions, with 28% being positive, 35% negative, and 37% referring to other administrative decisions.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, 4,804 second-instance decisions were made, with only 6% positive, 90% negative, and 4% referring to other administrative decisions.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

In the first quarter, Bulgarian authorities reported detaining 2,331 refugees and migrants, a reduction of 36% compared to the 3,663 people in the same period last year.<sup>9</sup> Four unaccompanied and separated children were handed over to competent institutions from January to March 2023.<sup>10</sup>

Refugees and migrants used the usual routes through Bulgarian territory, with most people spotted and detained entering via Türkiye and exiting via Serbia.

During the first trimester, Bulgaria recorded 3,338 refugees and migrants seeking asylum, and 25% were children.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, 467 unaccompanied and separated children sought protection and applied for asylum during the same period. Most of them came from Afghanistan (326), Syria (134) and Morocco (4).

In the same period, positive decisions were made in 1,688 cases, 395 asylum applications were rejected, and 4,322 cases finished other administrative decisions.<sup>12</sup>

**2,331**  
refugees and  
migrants were  
detained in the  
first quarter  
of 2023

Approximately 152,930 displaced people from Ukraine received Temporary protection cards until the end of March.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Republic of Bulgaria, Ministry of the Interior, available at [Миграционна статистика \(mvr.bg\)](https://mvr.bg/)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> The Republic of Bulgaria, State agency for the refugees at the Council of Ministers, available at [Up-to-date | STATE AGENCY FOR REFUGEES \(government.bg\)](https://www.government.bg/en/state-agency-for-refugees)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Eurostat, Beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of the month by citizenship, age and sex – monthly data, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR\\_ASYTPSM\\_\\_custom\\_5996564/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=c1c734bb-fa84-49d0-a163-7b5d911990d6](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR_ASYTPSM__custom_5996564/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=c1c734bb-fa84-49d0-a163-7b5d911990d6)

# NORTH MACEDONIA

Based on the UNHCR's regional report, 2,040 new arrivals were registered in the first trimester, an increase of 32% compared to 1,546 registered new arrivals in the same period last year.<sup>14</sup>

The route most often took children and adults from Greece through North Macedonia to Serbia.

In the first quarter, 72 new asylum applications were submitted.<sup>15</sup>

Estimations are that around 6,514 Ukrainian citizens were present in North Macedonia in March 2023.<sup>16</sup>

**2,040**  
new arrivals were  
registered during  
the first trimester

---

<sup>14</sup> UNHCR, Western Balkans - Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in mixed movements - as of end of March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/western-balkans-refugees-asylum-seekers-and-other-people-mixed-movements-end-march-2023>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> IOM, Mixed migratory flows in the Western Balkans, February 2023, <https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1076/files/documents/2023-03/WB%20Mixed%20Migration%20Flows%20Report%20%20-%20February%202023.pdf>



Based on the UNHCR's regional report, 825 new arrivals were registered in the first trimester, an increase of 87% compared to 441 registered new arrivals in the same period last year.

There are no indications that the route through Albania has changed.

In the first quarter, no new asylum applications were submitted.<sup>17</sup>

Estimations are that around 2,864 Ukrainian citizens were present in Albania in March 2023.<sup>18</sup>

**825**  
new arrivals were  
registered in the  
fourth trimester  
in Albania

From January till March 2023, Save the Children in Albania supported 783 Afghan citizens that fled the Taliban regime, including 238 children. Refugees accommodated in Shengjin, a coastal town in northern Albania, have benefited from non-formal education and MHPSS activities.

Save the Children in Albania established a child-friendly space as a protected environment where children, youth and their family members can participate in organised activities, play, socialise, learn, and express themselves as they rebuild their lives. Children/youth are supported with services that prevent them from physical harm and psychosocial distress, helping them continue learning and normalising their lives. They have particularly benefited from education activities through the application of Ready to Learn and Literacy Boost common approaches and psychosocial activities through the application of HEART methodology (Healing and Education through the Arts).

Individual psychological counselling has been provided for their parents/caregivers as well. Afghan children and community members have also accessed quality health services and health promotion activities, focusing on immunisation, child and mother health, nutrition, and overall upbringing.

<sup>17</sup> UNHCR, Western Balkans - Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in mixed movements - as of end of March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/western-balkans-refugees-asylum-seekers-and-other-people-mixed-movements-end-march-2023>

<sup>18</sup> IOM, Mixed migratory flows in the Western Balkans, February 2023, <https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11076/files/documents/2023-03/WB%20Mixed%20Migration%20Flows%20Report%20%20-%20February%202023.pdf>

# MONTENEGRO

Based on the UNHCR's regional report, 868 new arrivals were registered in the first trimester, an increase of 999% compared to 79 registered new arrivals in the same period last year.<sup>19</sup>

The main entry point remains the border with Albania. Some migrants and refugees continue their journey to the city of Pljevlja, where they pass the border to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the first quarter, 34 new asylum applications were submitted.<sup>20</sup>

Estimations are that around 6,726 Ukrainian citizens were present in Montenegro in March 2023.<sup>21</sup>



**868**  
new arrivals were  
registered in the  
first trimester  
of 2023

---

<sup>19</sup> UNHCR, Western Balkans - Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in mixed movements - as of end of March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/western-balkans-refugees-asylum-seekers-and-other-people-mixed-movements-end-march-2023>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> IOM, Mixed migratory flows in the Western Balkans, February 2023, <https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11076/files/documents/2023-03/WB%20Mixed%20Migration%20Flows%20Report%20%20-%20February%202023.pdf>

Based on the UNHCR's regional report, 237 new arrivals were registered in the first trimester, an increase of 182% compared to 84 registered new arrivals in the same period last year.<sup>22</sup>

Refugees and migrants were using the usual route to and through Kosovo\*.

In the first quarter, 60 new asylum applications were submitted.<sup>23</sup> Nine of them were boys, and one was a girl.

Estimations are that around 19 Ukrainian citizens were present in Kosovo\* in March 2023.<sup>24</sup>

**237**  
new arrivals were  
registered in the  
first trimester  
of 2023

<sup>22</sup> UNHCR, Western Balkans - Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in mixed movements - as of end of March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/western-balkans-refugees-asylum-seekers-and-other-people-mixed-movements-end-march-2023>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> IOM, Mixed migratory flows in the Western Balkans, February 2023, <https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1076/files/documents/2023-03/WB%20Mixed%20Migration%20Flows%20Report%20-%20February%202023.pdf>

The UNHCR reports that 16,216 new arrivals were registered in government-run centres.<sup>25</sup> Compared with figures in the first trimester of last year, when 10,373 new arrivals were registered, there is an increase of 56% in the number of refugees and migrants using government centres and transiting through Serbia.

As of the end of March, 3,160 refugees and migrants were present in the territory of Serbia, of whom 2,505 were accommodated in governmental centres, including 165 children.<sup>26</sup> When it comes to the government centres in Serbia, 15 of them in total were operational in March. Five were asylum centres, while nine were transit and reception centres. Children were accommodated in four asylum centres – 43 in “Krnjača” near Belgrade, three and two UASC in “Sjenica” AC and “Tutin” AC. In contrast, 20 children from Ukraine were accommodated in “Vranje” AC, together with their families.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, children were accommodated in five transit and reception centres: 17 in “Bujanovac” RTC and 27 in “Preševo” RTC (out of which 21 UASC) near the border with North Macedonia, one of the entering points to Serbia. Three children were accommodated in “Kikinda” RTC near the border with Romania, three in “Piroć” RTC

**16,216**  
new arrivals were  
registered in  
government-run  
centres in the first  
quarter of 2023

near the border with Bulgaria (out of which one is UASC), and 47 in “Šid” RTC (out of which 22 UASC) near the border with Croatia, one of the exit points from Serbia.<sup>28</sup> The availability of child protection services in mentioned government centres diverges.

Save the Children in North West Balkans partner organisation Centre for Youth Integration (CYI) continued to operate a child safe space in Krnjača Asylum Centre near Belgrade. CYI reached and supported 82 unique refugees and migrants in the first quarter, 58 children and 24 adults. Those who have received support include unaccompanied or separated children, parents, pregnant women and mothers of infants.

These unique individuals were supported with different services, such as psychosocial support, informal education, and support with formal education. In total CYI provided these services 898 times.

In the first quarter, 61 new asylum applications were submitted. From January to March 2023, 18 substantive decisions were made, including six positive decisions. Temporary protection for persons was granted to 117 persons fleeing due to the war in Ukraine.<sup>29</sup>

Estimations are that around 2,927 Ukrainian citizens were present in Serbia in March 2023.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> UNHCR, Serbia Updates for January, February, and March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/country/srb>

<sup>26</sup> UNHCR, Serbia Statistical Snapshot March 2023, available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100242>

<sup>27</sup> UNHCR, Serbia: Site Profiles (March 2023), available at <https://reliefweb.int/report/serbia/serbia-site-profiles-march-2023>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> UNHCR, Serbia Updates for January, February, and March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/country/srb>

<sup>30</sup> IOM, Mixed migratory flows in the Western Balkans, February 2023, <https://bih.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd11076/files/documents/2023-03/WB%20Mixed%20Migration%20Flows%20Report%20-%20-%20February%202023.pdf>

# ROMANIA

In the first trimester, 2,528 refugees and migrants sought asylum in Romania, a 57% decrease compared to the same period last year when 5,843 persons requested protection. Most of the asylum seekers in Romania came from Bangladesh (1,083), Syria (346) and Pakistan (239).

The border with Serbia remains the most active entry point in Romania for migrants and refugees travelling via the Balkans route. However, a significant number of people also entered via Bulgaria.

Among the refugees and migrants who applied for asylum in the first quarter, 128 were children, out of which 15 were unaccompanied or separated, including two unaccompanied girls. Most unaccompanied and separated children came from Syria, Somalia and Türkiye.

Approximately 123,487 displaced people from Ukraine – including 40,942 accompanied and 1,006 unaccompanied and separated children – received Temporary protection cards until the end of March.

**2,528**  
refugees and  
migrants sought  
asylum in the  
first trimester  
of 2023

Save the Children Romania organised a scaled response to meet the immediate humanitarian needs of Ukrainian children and families. From the beginning of the war till May 2023, around 283,147 Ukrainian refugees were assisted with child protection, education, information services, mental health and psychosocial support and cash/voucher/non-food Item support.

The same activities are organised for asylum seekers and refugees from other countries. Save the Children Romania is running child-friendly spaces in all five reception centres across the country and Mother and baby areas in three reception centres. Social assistance and educational activities were regularly organised, including various social cohesion activities that involved asylum-seeking children and children from Ukraine and Romania.

Authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina recorded 5,201 new irregular arrivals from January to March 2023.<sup>31</sup> Compared with the 2,241 new arrivals in the first trimester of last year, there is an increase of 132% in the number of refugees and migrants arriving and transiting through Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most often, they were from Afghanistan, Morocco, and Cuba.

**5,201**  
new irregular  
arrivals were  
recorded  
during the  
first trimester  
of 2023

At the end of March, 1,325 asylum-seekers and migrants were accommodated in reception facilities, while some 150 persons were estimated to be staying outside formal accommodation, mainly in Una-Sana Canton, the main exit point from the country.<sup>32</sup> The main entry point remained Tuzla Canton.

In the first quarter, 42 asylum claims were registered, and 17 positive decisions were made, 16 granting subsidiary protection and one granting refugee status. Seven negative decisions were also made, and 24 asylum applications were otherwise closed. At the end of March, there were 69 registered asylum-seekers pending processing and decision, of which one was an unaccompanied or separated child, and 12 were children in families.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, 11 single adult females were also waiting for the decision.

From January to March 2023, Save the Children in North West Balkans identified and supported 351 potential unaccompanied and separated boys in Tuzla, Sarajevo, and Una-Sana Canton. Boys from Afghanistan made up 86% of all identified children. None of the UASCs were found in squats and only a handful resided in private accommodations. Specialised child protection teams, in collaboration with relevant state institutions, persist in delivering vital child protection information, facilitating referrals and escorts to safe accommodation, and extending initial psychosocial support to children.

To foster educational opportunities, Save the Children in North West Balkans supported the enrolment of 58 refugee and migrant children into the preparatory school program in Una-Sana Canton. The preparatory program is based on Save the Children's HEART methodology (Healing and Education through the Arts). Refugee and migrant children could also join their peers from the local community in participating in out-of-school activities, which was very important for proper inclusion and integration in the community.

However, the limited stay of children hindered their regular class enrolment. For the first time since the beginning of the programme of formal education for refugee and migrant children in Una-Sana Canton in 2019, no child was enrolled in formal education as children and their families were quickly moving through the country.

<sup>31</sup> UNHCR, Bosnia and Herzegovina operational updates for January 2023, February 2023 and March 2023, available at <https://reliefweb.int/updates?advanced-search=%28PC40%29>

<sup>32</sup> UNHCR, Bosnia and Herzegovina Operational Update - March 2023, available at <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/100188>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid



# Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub

## Data and Trends Analysis

---

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

NGOs registered 336 refugees and migrants who reported pushbacks from Croatia to Bosnia and Herzegovina throughout the fourth trimester, 27 of whom were children in families, and 21 were unaccompanied and separated.<sup>34</sup> Around 63 refugees and migrants reported physical abuse or assault.

According to the competent ministry, 175 Ukrainian nationals – including 54 children – arrived and are staying in Bosnia and Herzegovina as of June.<sup>35</sup> Subsidiary protection was granted to 14 of them, while others used different legal grounds for staying. The majority, 155 Ukrainians, applied for temporary residence on humanitarian grounds, which allows one to stay up to 6 months without additional rights (besides residency).

---

<sup>34</sup> Border violence monitoring network, Balkan regional report – January, February, and March, available at <https://pro.drc.ngo/resources/documents/border-monitoring-factsheet/>

<sup>35</sup> UNHCR, Ukrainian nationals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 4 June 2023

In the first trimester, 7,884 refugees and migrants sought asylum in Croatia, a 663% increase compared to the same period last year when 1,033 persons requested protection.<sup>36</sup> Most of the asylum seekers in Croatia came from Russia (2,023), Afghanistan (1,892) and Türkiye (805).

Amongst the refugees and migrants who applied for asylum, 109 were unaccompanied and separated boys, and 13 were unaccompanied and separated girls.<sup>37</sup>

In the first quarter of 2023, three positive decisions granting asylum were made, of which two relate to children.

Equally to other countries on the Balkans route, Croatia is primarily a transit country. Migrants and refugees enter this EU member from Serbia or from Bosnia and Herzegovina. They usually exit and continue their travel to Slovenia. Access to Croatian territory is historically problematic, and numerous international organisations have documented a consistent pattern of ill-treatment of migrants trying to cross into Croatia, mainly from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**7,884**  
refugees and  
migrants sought  
asylum in the  
first trimester  
of 2023

Approximately 19,750 displaced people from Ukraine received Temporary protection cards until the end of March.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Republic of Croatia, Ministry of the Interior, available at <https://mup.gov.hr/statistika-228/228>

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Eurostat, Beneficiaries of temporary protection at the end of the month by citizenship, age and sex – monthly data, available at

[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR\\_ASYTPSM\\_custom\\_5996564/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=c1c734bb-fa84-49d0-a163-7b5d911990d6](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/MIGR_ASYTPSM_custom_5996564/bookmark/table?lang=en&bookmarkId=c1c734bb-fa84-49d0-a163-7b5d911990d6)

# Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub

## Data and Trends Analysis

# ABOUT THE PROJECT

The official closure of borders and the EU-Türkiye deal in March 2016 reduced the number of migrants, but did not stop the migrations through the Balkans. Refugees and migrants have instead been pushed into the hands of smugglers and traffickers, facing increased protection risks. The national protection systems in countries like Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Serbia are struggling to provide adequate support to new arrivals. There is a lack of reliable data on migration trends and many rights violations against migrants and refugees transiting through, or stranded in the Balkans.

Organizations and volunteer groups operating in the Balkans track irregular arrivals, departures, cases of pushbacks, detention, and violence in their own countries, often without clearly defined standards, objectives or consistency. At this time, there is no unified collection of information or a regional initiative to collate and organize the available information into a clear and concise overview.

International attention remains mostly focused on Greece, while the migration flows through other Balkan countries stay below the radar. The lack of comprehensive data analysis at individual country and regional levels increases the vulnerability of refugees and migrants on the move, children in particular, and hinders the development of relevant, evidence-based and responsive policies and programs.

Data and Trend Analysis (DATA) is a project launched by Save the Children's Balkan Migration and Displacement Hub (BMDH). The goal of this initiative is to synthesize valuable information on migration, especially on refugee and migrant children, and contribute to evidence-based programming and policy-making within the region.

The DATA Project focuses on the following three topics: (1) Main migratory trends: ebbs and flows in migration, changes in demographics, changes in routes, and seasonal changes; (2) Main protection violations: detention rates and conditions, pushbacks, returns, police violence, local acceptance and tensions; (3) Changes in national migration and social protection policies.

### Data Sources

Besides primary data collected by Save the Children and its partners, other data used for this purpose include publicly available data from reports, dashboards, publications, policies and articles, and information from other relevant stakeholders which are collected and analyzed. The initiative is and will remain open, encouraging the exchange of information, cooperation and partnership with all relevant actors.

Data is processed in line with national and international regulations and standards on protection of personal data.

### Geographical Scope

We intend to cover the Balkans route which includes the territories of Greece, Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Albania, Montenegro, Kosovo\*, Serbia, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia.

The Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub (BMDH) was established in 2018 in Belgrade, Serbia, in order to ensure visibility and continual support for children on the move in the Balkans. Drawing from the experience gained in responding to the refugee and migrant crisis in 2015-2017, BMDH documents good practices, improves learning and knowledge-sharing and promotes emergency preparedness. The Hub monitors trends in migrations across the Balkans and conducts research in particular issues related to mixed migrations, issuing regular reports. By developing partnerships in the countries along the Balkans route and liaising with other stakeholders working with children on the move, BMDH runs and promotes robust advocacy for children ensuring that their needs are brought to the forefront. Together with Save the Children's advocacy offices, BMDH implements regional advocacy initiatives targeting EU. The Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub works within Save the Children North West Balkans CO.

Find our Data and Trend Analysis and other reports and publications at: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net>  
keyword: BMDH



**Save the Children**

**Save the Children in North West Balkans  
Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub**

Kralja Milana 21, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia



nwb.savethechildren.net



savethechildrennwb



scnwb