



Save the Children

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS AT THE WESTERN BALKANS ROUTE

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

JANUARY – MARCH 2018

**Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub
Data and Trends Analysis**

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Data and Trends Analysis

IMPRESSUM

Every child has the right to a future. Save the Children works in North West Balkans and around the world 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

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Cover photo:

Sirvan* and his mother in Bihac, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Photo by: Sejla Dizdarevic, Save the Children

Eight months on the “Balkan route” have cut Sirvan’s childhood short. He and his parents escaped from the hardships of their home country Iraq to look for a safer home. They came to Bihac via the so-called Western Balkan route that refugees and migrants use to reach EU countries. They tried to cross border to Croatia three times, but each time the border police turned them back. “Now we don’t have money to continue the travel and my mother has problem with back pain, so she cannot walk for a long time,” said Sirvan.

Tell us what you think about our work or ask for more information:

Ivan Tasic, MEAL/Knowledge Manager

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Mixed migrations flow along the Balkans route continues. More than 4,000 refugees and migrants are estimated to have arrived to the Balkans countries (other than Greece) in the first three months of 2018

Figures from Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, FYROM, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina clearly indicate that the Western Balkans remains one of the most travelled migration route. During the first three months of 2018, Save the Children identified 1,480 new arrivals in Serbia. During the same period, 356 new refugees and migrants were identified in Bulgaria, 1,070 were recorded as transiting through FYROM, while 419 people applied for international protection in Romania. In addition, 1,172 new arrivals were identified in Albania and 1,314 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fact that many different routes are used and the comparison of demographic data indicate that these figures do not overlap completely. In addition, the available data does not capture all irregular migrants, particularly those who are avoiding police registration. Based on these indicators, we estimate that at least 4,000 refugees and migrants arrived to the region in the period from January to March of 2018.

Children make about one-quarter of all refugees and migrants transiting through the Balkans, a significant number of whom travelled alone.

Available data on the number of refugee and migrants transiting through the Balkans shows that the proportion of children in the total migrating population fluctuated between 10% and 35%. In addition, the data shows that the percentage of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) in the overall number of children vary from country to country, oscillating from 19% in Romania to 76% in FYROM, indicating that some children remain invisible and that there are significant differences in identification procedures. The vast majority of UASC are boys from Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is worth mentioning that reliable data on refugees and migrants disaggregated by age and sex were not available for Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The route through Albania and Montenegro towards Bosnia and Herzegovina became one of the most used transit corridors within the Western Balkans region

The data shows that new migration route through Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina became one of the most travelled routes in the region during the first three months of 2018. It is part of the newly used migration corridor which goes from Greece, through Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, from where refugees and migrants try to cross the border with Croatia to continue towards Western European countries.

More than 6,500 refugees and migrants are currently present in the Balkans countries (other than Greece)

The number of people accommodated in reception centres, at external addresses and unofficial shelters in Bulgaria, Serbia, Romania, FYROM, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina is estimated to be around 6,500. The data shows that the number of refugees and migrants present in the region did not increase despite new arrivals and new routes suggesting continuous onward movement.

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Data and Trends Analysis

MIGRATION ROUTES



Bulgaria

The vast majority of refugees and migrants enter Bulgaria from south-east, namely by crossing the border with Turkey and Greece. On the other side of the country, the strongest pressure is on the west and north borders, suggesting that most of the refugees and migrants continue their journey through Serbia and Romania.

FYROM

FYROM is mainly used as a corridor between Greece and Serbia. Refugees and migrants enter FYROM from Greece and most of them head north trying to cross the border with Serbia.

Albania

Albania is a transit country. It is part of the migration corridor which goes from Greece, through Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina where refugees and migrants try to cross the border with Croatia.

Serbia

The vast majority of refugees and migrants enter Serbia from Bulgaria and FYROM. In addition, as a result of visa liberalisation policy, increased number of people from Iran arriving to Serbia by plane. Within Serbia, the main transit point for refugees and migrants is Belgrade. Exit routes from Serbia are going through Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary and Romania.

Romania

Most of refugees and migrants arrived to Romania from Serbia, while a small number of them entered from Bulgaria. In addition to these two routes, the new route directly from Turkey across the Black Sea became more prominent in the second half of the year. The main exit point from the county is the north-west border with Hungary.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

The most of refugees and migrants enter Bosnia and Herzegovina from Serbia or from Montenegro. Within the country, they move north, north-west or south where they are trying to cross the border with Croatia.

DECREASED MIGRATION FLOW

According to the Bulgarian Ministry of Interior, from January to March 2018, police apprehended 356 people that were accused of illegally entering the country.¹ Compared to the data for the last four months of 2017, the monthly average of apprehended refugees and migrants decreased by around 45%.² As in the previous period, the continued influx of refugees and migrants did not increase the number of those accommodated in Bulgaria. During the reporting period, the number of refugees and migrants reported to be in official centres or at “external addresses”³ dropped by 245 people (from 1584⁴ in December 2017, to 1,339 reported in March). The Ministry of Interior further reports that 225 migrants were either deported or they left Bulgaria legally during the first three months of 2018. For the “missing” 20, we can only assume that they have irregularly continued their journey towards Western Europe.

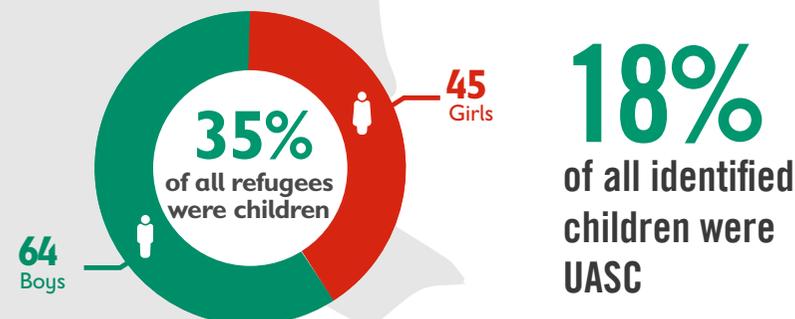
Official data on refugees and migrants in Bulgaria as well as data collected by Save the Children in Serbia show a significant decrease in the number of refugees and migrants transiting through Bulgaria.

The data collected by Save the Children and its partners in Serbia also show a significant decrease in the number of refugees and migrants transiting through Bulgaria. According to this data, the average arrivals from Bulgaria in late 2017 were 436 people per month, while in the first quarter of 2018 there were only about 85 person a month recorded as arriving through Bulgaria.

and migrants, and the possible use of new smuggling routes through Bulgaria, resulting in lower number of apprehensions.

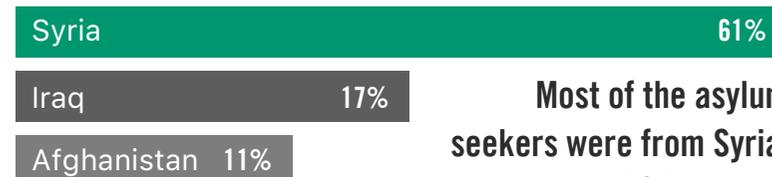
DEMOGRAPHY⁵

From January to March 2018, the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees reported that 310 persons have applied for international protection. This number includes 201 (65%) adults (135 men; 66 women) and 109 (35%) children (64 boys; 45 girls). According to the official statistics, 20 (18%) of children were traveling alone, most of them from Syria (50%) or Afghanistan (30%).



The majority of the asylum seekers were from Syria (61%), Iraq (17%) and Afghanistan (11%). The applicants from Iraq and Syria included a more balanced number of men, women and children indicating that many of them travel in family groups. The applicants from Afghanistan were predominantly men and teenage boys (almost 90%). As many as 6 out of 7 children from Afghanistan travelled alone, and all of them were boys.

Refugees and migrants by country of origin (N=310)



Most of the asylum seekers were from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

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Data and Trends Analysis

If we compare this data with the asylum statistics from 2017, it is evident that there was a change in the demographics. The most significant change is related to the country of origin. During the first eight months of the year, the majority of the asylum seekers were from Afghanistan (37%), whereas in the latter part of the year, about half of the applicants came from Iraq. However, data from the first quarter of 2018 shows that more than half of asylum seekers were from Syria. As a result, the proportion of women and girls increased by 10%, while the percentage of unaccompanied children in the total number of children decreased by 18%.

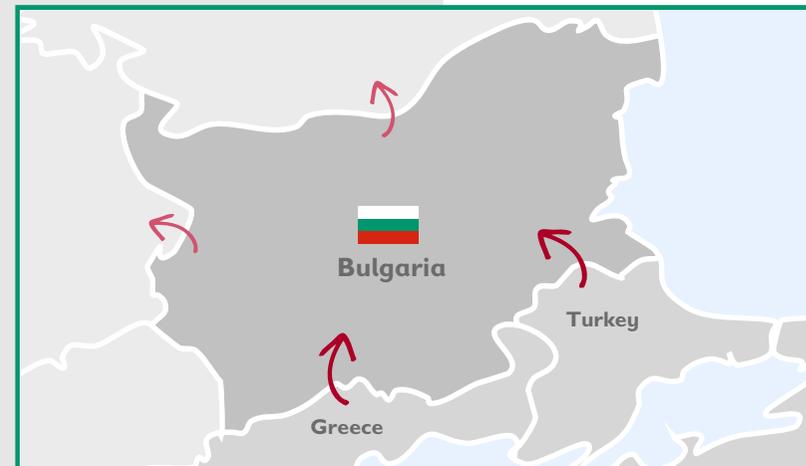
The Regional Overviews for 2017 highlighted that asylum recognition rates for Afghanistan is extremely low in Bulgaria. Namely, out of 1,704⁶ asylum seekers who were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection in 2017, only 22 (1.5%) were from Afghanistan, meaning that only about 2% of Afghans who applied were granted protection. The data from the State Agency for Migration from January – March 2018, shows some improvement, but with smaller reference numbers. In this period, out of 195 asylum seekers who were granted refugee status or subsidiary protection 22 (11%) were from Afghanistan.

MIGRATION ROUTES

The Bulgarian Ministry of Interior also provides data on where irregular migrants were apprehended. The locations are divided into three categories: (1) borders of entry, namely the borders with Turkey and Greece; (2) in-country, meaning that people were arrested somewhere within the country; (3) borders of exit,

namely North and West borders with Serbia and Romania. Even though this data does not capture the overall migration flow it gives us clues about cross-border migratory routes.

According to the available data, the vast majority of refugees and migrants entered the country from south-east, namely by crossing the border with Turkey (47%) and Greece (49%). It is important to highlight that migrants now evenly enter the country from both Turkey and Greece, while in 2017 the vast majority of refugees and migrants were apprehended at the border with Turkey. This is the trend that should be monitored in the future.



Migrants now evenly enter the country from both Turkey and Greece, while in 2017 the vast majority of refugees and migrants were apprehended at the border with Turkey.

The data also show a significant pressure on the west and north borders, suggesting that most of the refugees and migrants continue their journey through Serbia (more than 54%) and Romania (about 32%). To enter Serbia from Bulgaria, the vast majority of refugees and migrants use smuggling routes through the mountains, and to enter Romania, most of the refugee and migrants attempt to cross at the official border crossings.

DECREASED IRREGULAR FLOW

During the first three months of 2018, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) police apprehended 184⁷ refugees and migrants entering the country from Greece and brought them to the Transit Centre in Gevgelija. After a short stay in the Transit Centre, most of them were returned to Greece⁸, while about 40 persons submitted asylum requests. If we compare this with the number of arrests from September to December 2017, we notice a decrease in the monthly average number of apprehended refugees and migrants by about 40%. However, according to the report on the situation on border crossings in FYROM issued by Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, it is likely that the police practices immediate deportations without recording the cases:

“It is symptomatic that over the course of the entire month, the police have not brought a single group of refugees to the camp. It is assumed that the refugees who got caught down illegal roads were immediately deported to Greece, without previously being brought to the camp. This treatment calls into question the compliance with their rights, i.e. it is unclear whether they were provided with medical aid, legal aid with regards to the possibility to seek asylum or even basic humanitarian relief.”⁹

During the same period, the Macedonian Red Cross mobile team in Lipkovo reported assisting 886 irregular refugees and migrants near the border with Serbia.¹⁰

1,070 refugees and migrants were identified transiting through FYROM since the beginning of the year.

DEMOGRAPHY

The key obstacle for exploring the demographics of refugees and migrants transiting through FYROM is unavailability of official data from the field. In order to identify demographic trends, the data collected by Save the Children and its partners in Serbia is used instead. According to the data from Serbia, in the period from January to March, 669 of refugees and migrants reported that they have entered Serbia from FYROM. This number includes 499 (75%) adults (427 men; 27 women) and 170 (25%) children (156 boys; 14 girls). As many as 129 (76%) of all identified children travelled alone, the vast majority of them coming from Pakistan and Afghanistan.

76%
of all identified
children travelled
alone

The majority of identified refugees and migrants were from Pakistan (49%), Iraq (13%), Afghanistan (13%) and Syria (10%).

Refugees and migrants by country of origin (N=1,070)



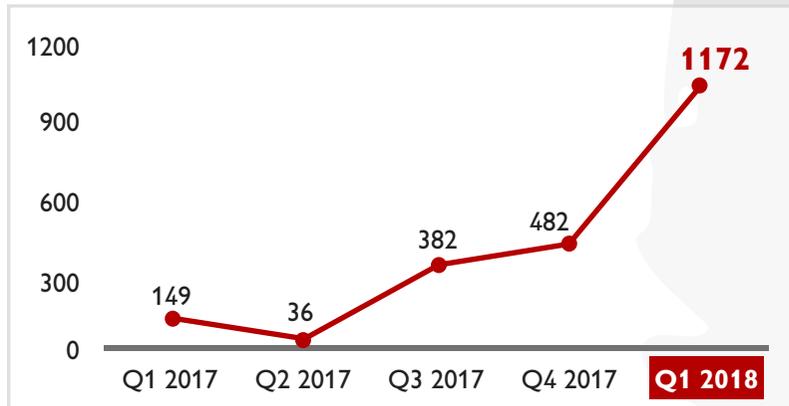
MIGRATION ROUTES

The data suggests that the migration route through FYROM is mainly used as a corridor between Greece and Serbia. Refugees and migrants enter FYROM from Greece and most of them head north trying to cross the border with Serbia. In addition to the route towards Serbia, some of the refugees and migrants are moving west using the route through Albania or Kosovo*.¹¹

NEW MIGRATION CORRIDOR

In late 2017 and the beginning of 2018, the migration route through Albania became one of the most travelled routes through the Western Balkans region. According to UNHCR, 1,172 newly arrived refugees and migrants were identified in Albania during the first three months of 2018. This is a significant increase compared to the previous year when only 149 new arrivals were identified in the first three months, and the total of 1,049 new refugees and migrants were identified for the whole year.

Number of identified newly arrived refugees and migrants in Albania (quarterly overview for 2017 and 2018)



Significant increase of refugees and migrants transiting through Albania during the first three months of 2018.

If the arrivals of refugees and migrants continue at the same rate, their number will soon exceed figures from 2015, when 2,047 persons of concern were identified.

Along with the increased number of new arrivals in the first three months of 2018, the data show an increase in the applications for international protection in Albania. Namely, from January to March, 541 persons applied for international protection, compared to 309 applications in 2017. Most applications in 2018 were made by Syrians (50%) or refugees and migrants from North Africa (19%).

DEMOGRAPHY

According to UNHCR, out of 1,172 newly arrived refugees and migrants identified in Albania, 90% were adult men, while children and women make only 10% of the population.

We have seen in the past that families with children are more cautious about the migration routes they take often using only the routes that are well established. A possible explanation for the high number of adult men could be that the route through Albania has been more firmly established only recently.

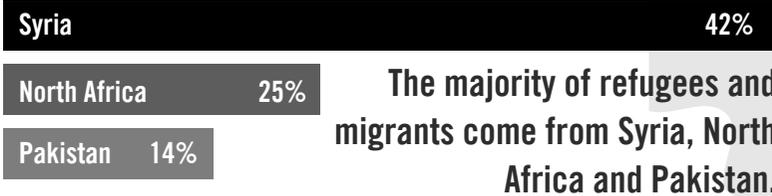
90% of refugees and migrants identified in Albania were adult men

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Data and Trends Analysis

The majority of refugees and migrants came from Syria (42%), North Africa (25%) and Pakistan (14%).

Refugees and migrants by country of origin (N=1,172)



MIGRATION ROUTES

The migration route through Albania is not a new route, but it is the first time it is used by so many refugees and migrants. According to the field data, most refugees and migrants enter the country from the south by crossing the border with Greece. Even though almost half of the identified new arrivals applied for international protection in Albania, they abscond after several days and try to continue the journey.¹² They move north towards Montenegro, most frequently crossing the border in the area of Lake Skadar.

Just as for other Western Balkans countries, Albania is perceived as a transit country. It is part of the migration corridor which goes from Greece, through Albania, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina where refugees and migrants try to cross the border with Croatia and continue their journey towards Western European countries.



ALBANIA

REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS ON THE MOVE

During the period from January to March 2018, Save the Children identified and supported 1,480 newly arrived refugees and migrants. Compared to the last four months of 2017, the daily average of identified new arrivals decreased by almost 50%, namely from 31 to 16 daily arrivals. As in the previous period, new arrivals have not increased the number of refugees and migrants in the country.

1,480
newly arrived
refugees and
migrants

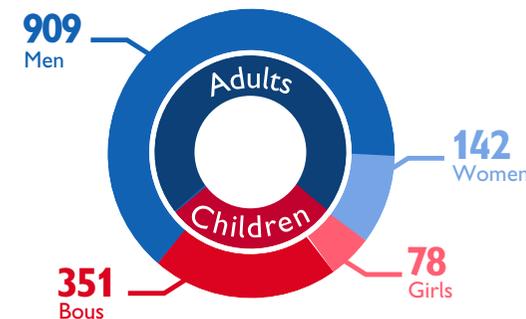
According to UNHCR, the overall number in March 2018 decreased for about 400 compared to December 2017,¹³ implying that more than 1,850 people left the country during the first three months of 2018. Around 250 have legally crossed the Hungarian border to seek asylum, while more than 1,600 refugees and migrants continued their journey using irregular channels.

DEMOGRAPHY

Save the Children and its partners routinely collect data on new refugee and migrant arrivals in Serbia. Even though this data cannot record all the people transiting through Serbia, the data set is illustrative, giving us an insight into the demography of new arrivals.

New arrivals included 1,480 people, identified during the period from January to March 2018¹⁴, of which 1,051 (71%) were adults (909 men; 142 women) while 429 (29%) were children (351 boys; 78 girls).

85%
of identified
refugees and
migrants in
Serbia were boys
and men



The total of 256 children were registered as travelling alone, representing 60% of all identified children, meaning that unaccompanied and separated children make about 17% of all new arrivals. Almost all identified unaccompanied minors (253 or 99%) were boys, mostly coming from Afghanistan 119 (46%), Pakistan 80 (31%) and Iraq 18 (7%).

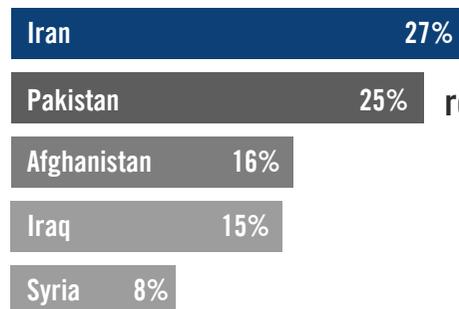
60% of all children were registered
as travelling alone

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Data and Trends Analysis

The majority of refugees and migrants identified were from Iran (27%), Pakistan (25%), Afghanistan (16%), Iraq (15%) and Syria (8%). The data shows that the proportion of women and girls is much higher within refugee and migrant groups from Iraq (31%), Iran (27%) and Syria (18%), while refugees from Afghanistan and Pakistan are predominantly men and boys.

Refugees and migrants by country of origin (N=1,480)



The majority of refugees and migrants identified were from Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria.

Data on refugees and migrants for the period from January to March shows some changes in the demographic data compared to the last quarter of 2017. The most significant change is related to the country of origin, namely the proportion of new arrivals from Iran increased by 12%, while the proportion from Iraq decreased by almost 20%. Changes in demographic trends are also evident regarding unaccompanied and separated children. During the period from September to December 2017, the unaccompanied minors made up 47% of all children, while this ratio increased to 60% during the last three months. Changes in demographic trends are also evident regarding unaccompanied and separated children.

Regarding the asylum process, from January to March 2018, Serbia's Ministry of Interior registered 1,801 intentions to seek asylum in Serbia.

During the same period of time, only 35 persons actually initiated the procedure and applied for asylum. This shows that refugees and migrants still perceive Serbia as a transit country.

MIGRATION ROUTES

Besides changes in demography, the data show a significant change in migration routes used by refugees and migrants in the first three months of 2018 compared to trends identified in 2017. Namely, during the last four months of 2017 about 51% of newly identified refugees and migrants entered Serbia from Bulgaria, while 36% of them used the route through FYROM. This year, and using the data collected from 1,443 refugees and migrants (98% of all identified persons), only about 18% of arrivals were from Bulgaria, while 46% of refugees and migrants entered Serbia from FYROM.



Almost half of newly identified refugees and migrants entered Serbia from FYROM

In addition to land arrivals, refugees and migrants from Iran arrive mainly by plane. During the first three months of 2018, plane arrivals make up 24% of all new arrivals.

Exit routes from Serbia are going through Croatia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Romania. Other than the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina, borders are very well protected, including by physical barriers at the Hungarian border, and by the strong presence of border police sometimes supported by Frontex. According to testimonies from refugees and migrants, it is difficult to cross the border and, in most cases, more than dozen attempts were needed to succeed. If caught by police after crossing the border, refugees and migrants were forced back to Serbia. This contributed to the establishment of a prominent new exit route from Serbia towards Bosnia and Herzegovina.

TRANSITING THROUGH ROMANIA

From early 2017, Romania became an important transit point of the Balkans migration route. This trend continued in 2018.

According to the Romania's General Inspectorate for Immigration, 419 persons applied for international protection during the first quarter of 2018, suggesting that the intensity of migration decreased

compared to the period from September to December of 2017. The data show that the number of asylum seekers decreased on monthly basis, which is a common trend in Romania during the cold season. However, it is expected that numbers will increase over the next months.

419
persons applied for international protection during the first quarter of 2018

In addition to applications registered, it is worth mentioning that some migrants caught in Romania do not want to apply for asylum in Romania and are held in public custody. Some of them, including vulnerable cases - pregnant women, families with children, sick persons, receive a tolerated status, which grants them 90-day access to the Romanian territory.

According to the field data, about 330 people were accommodated in five reception centres in Romania at the end of March.

DEMOGRAPHY

From January to March 2018, Romanian officials registered 419 asylum applications. About one third of newly registered asylum seekers were children.

The majority of applicants came from Iraq (56%) and Syria (20%), followed by small number of arrivals from Iran (5%), which is quite similar to the data from 2017.

Refugees and migrants by country of origin (N=419)



The majority came from Iraq and Syria, followed by small number of arrivals from Iran.

During the first three months of 2018, Save the Children in Romania identified and supported 74 newly arrived children, out of which 64% were boys, while 36% were girls. Most of the children were from Iraq (65%) and Syria (15%) and 19% (14) of children travelled alone, most of them from Iraq. Out of 14 unaccompanied children, 11 (79%) were boys and 3 (21%) were girls.

MIGRATION ROUTES

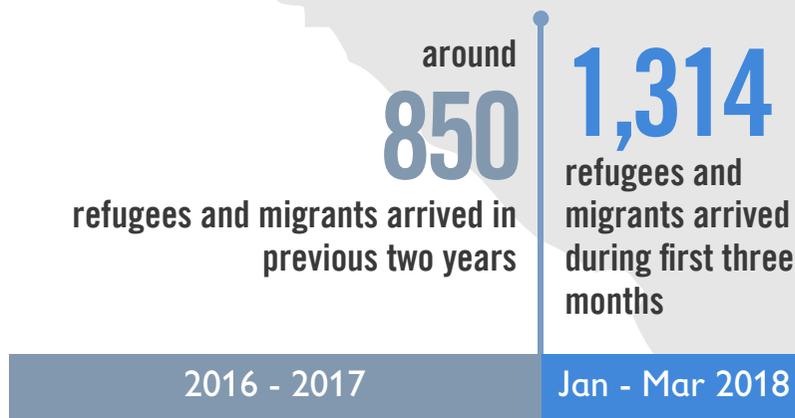
Most of refugees and migrants (about 80%) arrived to Romania from Serbia, while a small number entered from Bulgaria.

As in other Balkans countries, refugees and migrants see Romania as a transit point on their way towards Western Europe. According to the recent field data, the length of their stay in Romania decreased compared to the beginning of the year. Instead of staying for months, many of them now choose to leave the country within weeks.

The main exit point from the county is its north-west border with Hungary.

NEW ROUTE THROUGH BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Migration route through Bosnia and Herzegovina emerged in late 2017 and quickly became one of the main transit corridors in the region. According to the authorities, 1,314 newly arrived refugees and migrants have been registered during the first three months of 2018.¹⁵ Compared to previous years (around 100 refugees and migrants registered in 2016 and 754 in 2017), this is a significant increase and it is expected that the numbers of refugees and migrants using this route will only grow.



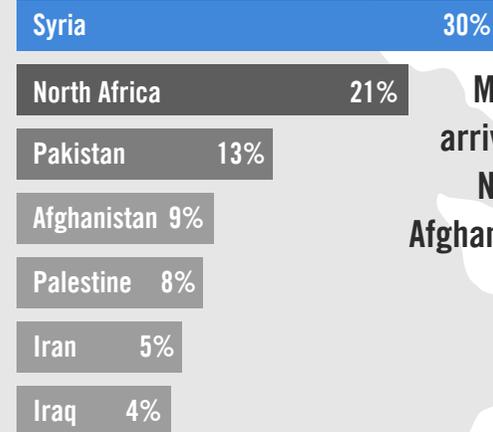
The data show that 741 refugees and migrants expressed intentions to seek asylum from January to March 2018, and 253 persons have submitted their asylum claim.

DEMOGRAPHY

At the moment, the disaggregated data on refugees and migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina are not available. However, data gained from different reports can be indicative of refugee and migrants' demography.

According to the available reports, most of 1,314 registered new arrivals came from Syria (30%), North Africa (21%), Pakistan (13%), Afghanistan (9%), Palestine (8%), Iran (5%) and Iraq (4%).

Refugees and migrants by country of origin (N=1,314)



Most of registered new arrivals came from Syria, North Africa, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Palestine, Iran and Iraq.

Even though it is not clear how many children and women were registered in the total number of identified new arrivals, the data on asylum applications are more illustrative. Out of 253 people who applied for international protection 220 (87%) were adults (201 men; 19 women), while only 33 (13%) were children (boys 20; girls 13).

In addition, the available data show that 21 unaccompanied and separated children were identified in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the first three months of 2018 and all of them were boys.

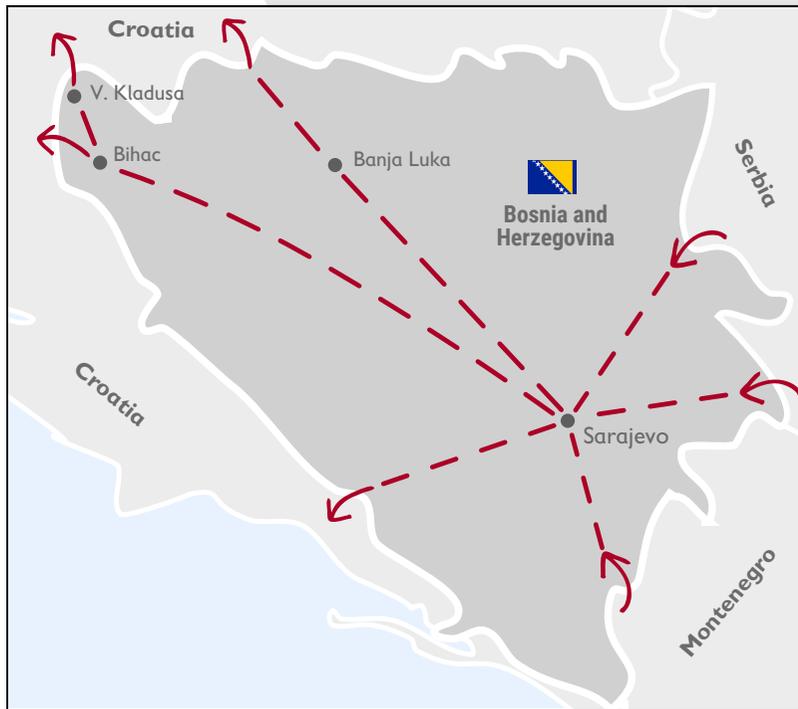
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Data and Trends Analysis

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

MIGRATION ROUTES

Most of the refugees and migrants identified in Bosnia and Herzegovina entered into the country from south or south-east by irregularly crossing the border with Serbia or Montenegro. Entry routes merge in Sarajevo, which is the capital located in central part of the country. From there, refugees and migrants head towards Croatia.



The border between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia is more than 900 kilometres long. According to the data from the field, the hardest pressure is on the north-west part of the border in the area of Bihac and Velika Kladusa.

Besides these two towns, refugees and migrants were identified in the north (Banja Luka area), and in the south (towards Dalmatia region). It is estimated that about 1,000 people were present in the country at the end of March.



Balkans Migration and Displacement Hub

Data and Trends Analysis

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The official closure of borders, and the EU-Turkey deal in March 2016, reduced the number of migrants, but did not stop the migrations through the Balkans. Refugees and migrants have been pushed into the hands of smugglers and traffickers facing heightened protection risks. The national protection systems in countries like Bulgaria, FYROM, and Serbia are struggling to provide adequate support to the new arrivals. There is a lack of reliable data on migration trends and 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 the current 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 focused on Greece, while the migration flows through other Balkans countries stay below the radar. The lack of comprehensive data analytics at individual country and regional level 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 Centre (BMDC). 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 will focus 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, publicly available data from reports, dashboards, publications, policies and articles, and information from other relevant stakeholders will be collected and analyzed. The initiative will remain open and will encourage the exchange of information, cooperation and partnership with all relevant actors. Data processing will be done in line with national and international regulations and standards on protection of personal data.

Geographical Scope

We will cover the Balkans route, without Greece, which includes the territories of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Hungary.

¹ Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria, [Monthly Information on Migration Situation in the Republic of Bulgaria for March 2018](#)

² In average, 119 refugees and migrants were apprehended each month in period January – March 2017, while the average for the last four months of 2017 was 212

³ “Asylum seekers are allowed to reside outside the reception centres at so called “external addresses”. This could be done if asylum seekers submit a formal waiver from their right to accommodation and social assistance, as warranted by law, and declare to cover rent and other related costs at their own expenses. Except those few whose financial condition allows residence outside the reception centres, the other group of people who live at external addresses are usually Dublin returnees, to whom the SAR applies the exclusion from social benefits, including accommodation as a measure of sanction within the jurisdiction for such decision as provided by the law (Law and Asylum and Refugees – article 29)”. Source: [Country Report: Bulgaria](#), p 48, Bulgarian Helsinki Committee

⁴ Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria, [Monthly Information on Migration Situation in the Republic of Bulgaria for December 2017](#)

⁵ The only way to track demographic data of refugees and migrants in Bulgaria is through asylum applications

⁶ Source: Bulgarian Helsinki Committee [Country Report: Bulgaria](#)

⁷ Source: Helsinki Committee of the Republic of Macedonia, Monthly report on the situation at the border crossings Gevgelija and Kumanovo for [January 2018](#), [February 2018](#), [March 2018](#)

⁸ Data from the Macedonian Helsinki Committee, also reporting that apprehended refugees and migrants are returned back to Greece at their own request.

⁹ Source: Helsinki Committee of the Republic of Macedonia, Monthly report on the situation at the border crossings Gevgelija and Kumanovo for [March 2018](#)

¹⁰ Source: IOM, Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean: Compilation of Available Data and Information for [January 2018](#), [February 2018](#) and [March 2018](#)

¹¹ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

¹² Source: IOM, Mixed Migration Flows in the Mediterranean: Compilation of Available Data and Information for [March 2018](#)

¹³ Source: UNHCR, Serbia Monthly Snapshot for [March 2018](#)

¹⁴ For the same period of time, UNHCR observed 925 new arrivals, while authorities registered 1,731 intentions to seek asylum. Source: UNHCR, Serbia Monthly Snapshot for [January 2018](#), [February 2018](#), [March 2018](#)

¹⁵ Source: UNCT Operational Update for [March 2018](#)



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