

Emmanuel and his family arrived as refugees from Burundi. They are now hosted in Belgrade, Serbia and are benefitting from essential services provided through UNICEF-supported

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# Refugee and Migrant Response in Europe

Quarterly Update No. 3

Reporting Period: 1 July to 30 September 2024

Situation in Numbers<sup>i</sup>

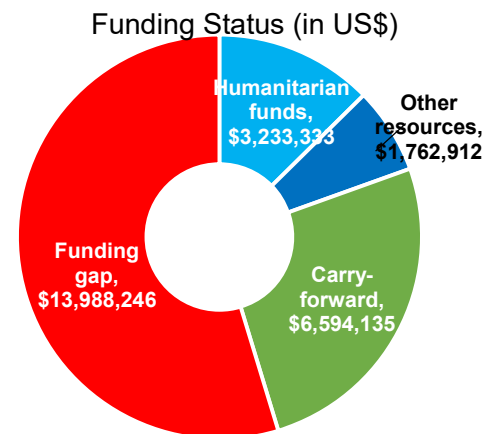
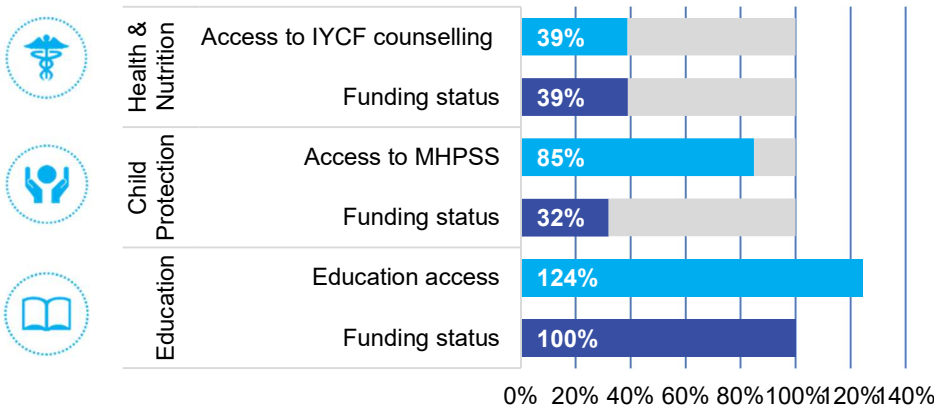
## Highlights

- Between July and September 2024, an estimated 163,341 refugees and migrants<sup>i</sup> arrived in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, mainly from Afghanistan, Syria, Egypt, Türkiye, Palestine, and several other countries in Africa and South Asia.
- Receiving countries continue to face critical gaps in providing adequate reception facilities, health services, sanitation, and protection, particularly for unaccompanied children, women, and girls. Challenges include addressing gender-based violence, ensuring equitable service access, and offering proper care and legal guardianship for vulnerable children.
- In the five countries, UNICEF reached 24,314 people with mental health support and provided 9,986 unaccompanied and separated children with alternative care or reunification. Around 38,941 children gained access to education, and 117,167 people were engaged in social behaviour change activities.
- As of 30 September 2024, UNICEF received close to US\$ 2.8 million against its USD 25.6 million ask. With US \$ 1.7 million in other resources and US\$ 6.6 million in carry-forward funding, the appeal is 55 percent funded.

- 123,878** - estimated # of refugee and migrant arrivals in 2024
- 26,133** - estimated # of children among arrivals in 2024
- 22,489** - estimated # of unaccompanied and separated children present

## UNICEF Appeal 2024 US\$ 25.6 million

## UNICEF's Response and Funding Status<sup>ii</sup>



<sup>i</sup> Arrivals in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Data based on UNHCR, IOM, Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Greek Special Secretariat for Unaccompanied Minors, Greek General Secretariat for Vulnerable Persons and Institutional Protection, Italian Ministry of Interior, Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Bulgarian Ministry of Interior and State Agency for Refugees, Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina. While the figures do not include Ukrainian refugees who arrived in the region, the countries received a significant number of arrivals from Ukraine as well. For Greece, data of arrivals is only available as of July 2024. For Bulgaria, this only includes the number of asylum-seekers, the number of arrivals is not available but estimated to be much larger. For Serbia, the number of children among arrivals are not available.

<sup>ii</sup> Learning earning activities were complemented by digital platforms, courses, and tools, increasing reach and resulting in increased access to education. MHPSS services included provision of services through online and face to face modality achieving higher results.

## Funding Overview and Partnerships

By the end of September, UNICEF had received US\$ 2.8 million against its 2024 funding requirement of US\$ 25.6 million for the refugee and migrant response, included in the [2024 Europe and Central Asia HAC appeal](#). With US\$ 6.6 million carry-over, and US\$ 1.7 million in other resources, the response is 55 percent funded. Generous contributions were received from the Government of Switzerland, the European Commission, UNICEF National Committee in Germany, Italy, Norwegian, Sweden, and United States and pooled Global and Regional Thematic Humanitarian Funds.

To safeguard the rights of children and families on the move, UNICEF continued to maintain partnerships with national authorities; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and other United Nations agencies; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). These partnerships remained critical to enhancing advocacy, coordination, monitoring, and inclusive and integrated responses at the local, national, regional, and cross-border levels. Within the context of the [European Union \(EU\) Pact on Migration and Asylum](#), approved in April 2024 by the European Parliament, UNICEF remains ready to support member states in its implementation, and to work to strengthen protection capacities of non-EU countries at the EU's external borders, to ensure the pact provides a more predictable system for managing migration and sharing solidarity whilst maintaining child specific safeguards.

## Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

Between July and September 2024, an estimated 40,086 refugees and migrants, including 9,386 children and 6,444 of them unaccompanied and separated,<sup>iii</sup> arrived in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The main countries of origin were Afghanistan, Syria, Egypt, Türkiye, Palestine, and other countries in North Africa, South Asia, Africa. While this figure represented a decrease in overall arrivals of 72 percent compared to the same period in 2023, at the end of September, at least 22,489 unaccompanied and separated children were estimated to be present in the five countries, representing an increase of 8 percent. The countries also received a significant number of arrivals from Ukraine<sup>iv</sup>.

In September, a [shipwreck tragedy](#) off the coast of Lampedusa, Italy killed more than 20 people, including three children, underlining the importance of coordinated search and rescue operations at sea, safe disembarkation, community-based reception, and safe, legal and accessible pathways to asylum. Furthermore, there was a noted increase in the number of children, particularly unaccompanied, entering Spain through southern borders. As of September, approximately 37,970 people have entered, with around 95% arriving by sea. Of these, 26,758 have arrived in the Canary Islands, representing approximately 70% of total entries and 75% of maritime arrivals<sup>v</sup>. Around 5,500 unaccompanied and separated children are currently estimated to be accommodated in emergency reception centres in the Canaries. The childcare system, which only had capacity for around 2,000 children is thus stretched far beyond capacity, prompting the Government to request UNICEF for support in managing this very high caseload of unaccompanied and separated children. Recent instability and conflict in the Middle East could potentially further increase the arrivals of vulnerable populations, and support needs in the region.

Refugees and migrants continue their dangerous journeys through the Mediterranean and Western Balkan routes due to a variety of root causes, including conflict and instability, impacts of climate change, disasters, and food insecurity. With border controls intensifying following the introduction of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, some countries have recorded a decrease in registered arrivals. At the borders, significant pushbacks and detentions as well as psychological and physical violence continued to be reported, impacting the ability of refugees and migrants to access their asylum rights and essential services.<sup>vi</sup> Among receiving countries, critical gaps include overcrowded and inadequate reception facilities – especially for unaccompanied and separated children, women, and girls. Strained national systems pose challenges for governments in ensuring equitable access to high-quality services for refugees and migrants. Capacity gaps remain in providing adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities, sufficient access to health and protection services and learning opportunities for children and families as well as satisfactory measures to address gender-based violence (GBV) risks for women and girls. Insufficient mechanisms for identification, referrals, individual case management and best interest determination as well as limited availability of alternative care and legal guardianship services, exacerbated the vulnerability of children on the move.

## Summary Analysis of Programme Response

### GREECE

A total of 4,696 refugees and migrants arrived in Greece during July<sup>vii</sup>, bringing the total arrivals of adults and children in 2024 to 23,204, including 1,743 unaccompanied and separated children. The majority arrived by sea (19,597), among which

<sup>iii</sup> Data on arrivals in Greece only available for July. Number of children among arrivals not available for Serbia. Number of unaccompanied and separated children among arrivals not available for Greece and Serbia.

<sup>iv</sup> The response for the Ukrainian refugee populations continued to be provisioned for and reported under the 2024 Ukraine and Refugee Response HAC.

<sup>v</sup> Data source: Government of Spain.

<sup>vi</sup> Border Violence Monitoring Network [Inputs to the EUAA Asylum Report 2024](#). Moreover, the Danish Refugee Council is reporting monthly pushback from Croatia to Bosnia and Herzegovina: <https://pro.drc.ngo/resources/documents/border-monitoring-factsheet/>.

<sup>vii</sup> More recent data is not available.

children accounted for 33 percent. The most common countries of origin were Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and Egypt. By the end of August, the number of people living in closed and controlled access centres on the islands and accommodation and reception facilities on the mainland was 19,691 (4,027 women, 10,874 men), among which 4,790 were children. The growing number of unaccompanied children arriving created a need to increase the number of guardianship representatives to provide services for individualized quality support. Due to the limited capacity of long-term shelters, the Ministry of Migration and Asylum is exploring other placement options for unaccompanied children.

**Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBViE) and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA):** To enhance the child protection system for refugee and migrant children, UNICEF seconded an expert to the Ministry of Migration and Asylum General Secretariat for Vulnerable Populations and Institutional Protection to support the development and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation framework for the implementation of the guardianship scheme for all unaccompanied children. As part of this work, focus group discussions with boys and girls who are unaccompanied or separated from their families were organized in Thessaloniki and Lesbos, with more to be held until the end of the year.

Through an expert seconded at the Reception and Identification Service, UNICEF supported the development of a training package to enhance child protection safeguards. The material will be used for the delivery of trainings at 32 refugee sites.

**Education and Skills Building:** UNICEF, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports and universities, undertook preparatory work for the new cycle of the Teach4Integration professional training programme for educators and school leaders, which is expected to be launched in October 2024. The training programme is complemented by a digital platform which was updated in line with the Institute of Educational Policy requirements and aims to support teachers engaged in refugee education. The platform is expected to be fully operational in November 2024. In parallel, UNICEF continued to boost refugee and migrant children's learning by providing digital learning solutions to public schools through the Akelius Digital Language Learning platform.

**Looking Ahead:** UNICEF will strive to support the State in protecting refugee and migrant children, including unaccompanied children, primarily through system strengthening and by building the capacity of the authorities to respond to their needs. While access to education is now bolstered, efforts will concentrate on ensuring quality and inclusive education is available and that young refugee and migrants are empowered through 21st century skills to become active agents of change in their communities.

## ITALY

Between July and September 2024, 26,225 refugee and migrants arrived in Italy, among which 4,735 were children, 2,579 of whom were unaccompanied and separated<sup>viii</sup>. The main countries of origin were Bangladesh, Syria, Tunisia, Egypt and Guinea, while many unaccompanied children were also from Gambia. So far in 2024, more than 49,000 people arrived in Italy, representing a decrease of 65 percent compared to the same period in 2023. Approximately 20 percent among arrivals were children and adolescents, of whom about 14 percent were unaccompanied. The number of individuals with compounded and acute vulnerabilities, particularly children, girls, and women, increased, requiring identification and referral. Child protection and GBV support services remained largely inadequate, exposing women, girls, and children to further risks of violence, abuse and exploitation. Italy renewed the ongoing State of Emergency for another six months to address the refugee and migrants' situation.

**Child Protection, GBViE and PSEA:** During the reporting period, UNICEF reached 3,763 children and caregivers with Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions in border and transit regions. The online service provision of legal counselling and psycho-social support Here4U, integrated into U-Report on the Move, supported 353 socio-legal and MHPSS cases, including families. In Trapani and Agrigento, unaccompanied children, families, and GBV survivors benefitted from in-person case management through UNICEF supported personnel including vulnerability assessments, prompt referral to child protection services, and transfer to adequate reception facilities.

A total of 1,679 women, girls, and boys were supported through GBV-sensitive interventions, while 655 women, girls and boys received specialized in-person GBV support. In addition, 150 survivors and/or women, girls and boys at risk were provided with peer support, dedicated workshops, individual case management, childcare and support in accessing specialized services through Safe Spaces.

In support of the guardianship system and alternative care, 156 new participants enrolled in the online course on the best interests of the child, while 103 guardians participated in peer-to-peer sessions on international protection, accessed technical guidance on individual cases and joined focus group discussions on "the human factor" in their relationship with children. Additionally, 110 staff from reception centers and social workers participated in training courses on family foster care, with a focus on specific skills in case management, MHPSS and GBV support for foster families.

Moreover, UNICEF conducted two PSEA trainings for implementing partners and CSOs: one as a training of trainers, the other on PSEA reporting and referral.

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<sup>viii</sup> Data from the Ministry of Interior

**Education:** 54 new students with a migrant background (35 boys and 19 girls) enrolled in the Akelius summer/pre-school classes held by implementing partner Agire Insieme Per l'Intercultura (AIPI), bringing the total number in the current school year to 682 students (319 girls, 363 boys) across 48 schools involved.

In July and August, UNICEF and its implementing partner Junior Achievement (JA) engaged 14 reception facilities in a pilot training initiative to teach them how to deliver the workshops. By September 2024, six workshops were co-led with the staff at reception facilities.

During the reporting period, 245 young refugees and migrants (including 123 unaccompanied children) participated in SKILLS4YOUTH workshops in reception centers across six Italian regions focused on skills development and job orientation. 93 percent of participants said the workshop helped them understand what they need to work in Italy and raised their awareness of workers' rights and the risks of working without a contract. Since its first implementation in January 2023, 3,957 young refugees and migrants participated in SKILLS4YOUTH workshops.

**Adolescent Development and Participation (ADAP):** During the reporting period, 1,100 young refugees and migrants registered on the U-Report On The Move platform, bringing the total to 16,978 U-Reporters. Among other services, the platform hosts U-Blog, a blogging channel run directly by young people aged 14 to 24, focused on topics that concern them such as clean energy, elections, education and social inclusion. The youth-run podcast GRIOT also offers a powerful way to engage with youth, offering accessible content on important issues, such as protection, skills building and MHPSS.

A U-Report advocate represented young beneficiaries at the steering group meeting of the EU-project PROTECT and shared the results of a [poll on access to education](#) that involved 827 U-Reporters with the Ministry of Education and Interior.

Through the Campaign against racism and discrimination (OPS!) young people produced and published informative videos on YouTube and Instagram ([video](#)) and [screened during Giffoni Film Festival](#) (19-28 July).

**Social and Behaviour Change (SBC), Community Engagement and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP):** During the reporting period, 688 individuals were reached with child protection information, including legal support and information about local services. The majority of whom were minors, including 347 unaccompanied and separated children. Moreover, 231,170 refugees and migrants, frontline workers and caregivers were reached through online, life-saving information material focusing on access to services, legal support, awareness raising on child protection, education, MHPSS, GBV, disseminated via U-Report channels (Facebook and Instagram) with organic and paid promotions. Multi-language information, uploaded on [UROTM website](#), was provided on the abovementioned topics and 2,245 individuals were engaged via U-Report on The Move social media channels. A poll [on access MHPSS services](#) involved 591 U-Reporters, the results of which will help to improve access for young people.

Awareness-raising material on mental health, child protection, discrimination, Italian language and "places to visit in Italy" was produced and disseminated in French, Italian and English on the [TikTok channel](#), reaching an average of 1,832 people. All the online activities were shared with 619 reception centers frontline workers via a bi-monthly newsletter.

A promotional campaign for the outreach of the OPS! web application designed to raise awareness on racism and intersectional discrimination was launched on ScuolaZoo's channels, reaching 2,068,839 young people (18-24 years) on TikTok. Additionally, 30,725 young people used OPS! to test their unconscious bias.

**Looking ahead:** Despite the number of arrivals decreasing over 2024, refugees and migrants continue arriving bearing acute and compounded vulnerabilities, which need immediate identification, referral, and management. Unfortunately, despite all efforts by the Italian Government, the system is still not fully equipped to respond to the needs. It is therefore crucial to continue the two-fold approach of protection interventions along with system strengthening for preparedness and resilience.

Under the framework of the EU-funded "PROTECT project", UNICEF will ensure critical protection interventions such as child protection, GBV prevention/mitigation/response, MHPSS, community engagement, skills development, and access to Italian language courses. The interventions will continue to be implemented in hotspot areas and key reception centers until the end of 2024, to meet basic humanitarian needs of vulnerable migrant and refugee children, families and girls.

## BULGARIA

Between July and August 2024, 6,030 asylum-seekers arrived in Bulgaria, including 1,636 children and 1,225 unaccompanied and separated children<sup>ix</sup>. The main countries of origin were Syria, Afghanistan, Morocco, while many unaccompanied children were also from Egypt. Since the beginning of the year, more than 38,000 asylum-seekers have attempted to enter Bulgaria. So far in 2024, 11,488 asylum-seekers arrived in Bulgaria, among which 3,403 were children, 2,064 of whom were unaccompanied and separated, representing a decrease of 56 percent compared to last year.

**Child Protection, GBVIE and PSEA:** Since its opening in April 2024, 764 unaccompanied and separated children (745 boys and 19 girls) were placed in the new safe zone. UNICEF deployed a consultant to the safe zone to enhance social work services and strengthen the individual case management system. Moreover, UNICEF developed a partnership with the

<sup>ix</sup> Data from the State Agency for Refugees

Ministry of Justice and the National Bureau for Legal Aid to strengthen the national childcare system and, in particular, the legal representation of unaccompanied and separated children.

**Education:** As part of its partnership with State Agency for Refugees (SAR), UNICEF continued supporting the provision of Bulgarian language learning for 65 children in three government-run reception centres.

**ADAP:** UNICEF extended its partnership with the Foundation Mission Wings until the end of the year to enhance the inclusion of refugee children through sports activities for unaccompanied and separated children and adolescents placed in the largest reception center in Harmanli.

**Looking Ahead:** The identification and referral of unaccompanied and separated children needs further investment and strengthening. Alternative care arrangements, which are best suited for the complex needs of children at risk, are currently not open to unaccompanied and separated children. Hence, the majority of them are placed in reception centres where living conditions are below minimum standards, lacking safety, security, privacy and basic sanitation and hygiene.

## SERBIA

Between July and September 2024, 5,479 refugees and migrants arrived in Serbia, bringing the total number of arrivals in 2024 to 14,309<sup>x</sup>. While the number of arrivals decreased compared to last year, the percentage of children and women accommodated in reception and asylum centre is higher; 13 percent were children, compared to 7 percent last year. The main countries of origin were Syria, Türkiye, Afghanistan, Burundi, and Pakistan. People on the move continued transiting through Serbia to reach EU destinations without registration, creating challenges in effective service provision and information dissemination, and making them less visible and more vulnerable.

**Health and Nutrition:** Supported by UNICEF, the Institute for Public Health of Serbia (IPHS) finalized guidelines for prevention of use of psychoactive substances by asylum seekers and migrants and provided hands-on training for frontline workers. IPHS led thematic workshops for refugee and migrant children, applying a child-friendly methodology, to strengthen their capacities to recognize the importance of self and peer support for health-related issues including substance abuse.

In addition, IPHS developed the “Guidelines for the Prevention of Infectious Diseases in the Refugee and Migrant Population”, targeting all persons and organizations involved in providing services to refugees and migrants. The guidelines help frontline workers in reception and asylum centres to meet basic standards of hygiene in living space and to prevent and monitor the spread of infectious diseases.

UNICEF continued to advocate for free access to immunization services for refugee and migrant children, which resulted in a growing number of immunized children in the public health system<sup>xi</sup>. Moreover, UNICEF-supported mechanisms provided primary health care services to children and women.

**Child Protection, GBViE and PSEA:** Child protection programming benefitted 495 girls and boys, including 309 unaccompanied and separated children, at the safe hub in Belgrade and at borders crossings. The interventions included individual and group work with children and parents, outreach, and information dissemination, recreational and sports activities, psychosocial support, and identification and referral to specialized child protection services for the most vulnerable children and adolescents, in cooperation with Info Park.

Safe, survivor centred GBV prevention and response services benefitted 528 women, girls and boys who survived or were at risk of GBV. The programme included referral to case management and distribution of dignity kits for women and girls for GBV risk mitigation, as well as hygiene kits for the most vulnerable unaccompanied boys.

Refugee and migrant women and girls were empowered through a variety of targeted activities tailored to their unique needs and supporting their personal growth. This included dedicated Ladies Day activities, which provided a safe and supportive space for adolescent girls and women to connect, share experiences, and build resilience. These activities were designed to cultivate a sense of community while equipping participants with essential tools and knowledge to navigate challenges.

Through the partnership network, 859 beneficiaries were informed about safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse. Moreover, UNICEF, in cooperation with the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration and the Danish Refugee Council, produced two age- and language-appropriate, child-friendly brochures on house rules in reception and asylum centers.

**Education, ECD and Skills Building:** UNICEF continued providing system-strengthening support to enable the rapid and unconditioned enrolment of all refugee and migrant children in formal education, supporting 13 schools in developing Learning Clubs as safe places for learning, extracurricular activities, interaction, and integration. During the reporting period, 228 children (121 female, 107 male) received support in Learning Clubs, out of which 69 (33 female, 36 male) were refugees and migrants. Assistance included classes in Serbian as a foreign language, supplementary classes in mathematics, natural sciences, and intercultural workshops.

<sup>x</sup> Data from the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration/UNHCR

<sup>xi</sup> Data will be available at the end of the year.

UNICEF's voluntary programme contributed to new learning opportunities for refugee and migrant children, significantly increasing well-being and improving language, digital, and key and intercultural competencies. Through summer school activities, 187 students (110 female, 215 male) were educated by teachers and youth volunteers, among whom 26 (14 female, 12 male) were refugee and migrant children.

**WASH and Basic Needs:** The provision of dignity and hygiene kits was vital for vulnerable women, girls, and boys to minimize the protection risks and address their basic needs in challenging circumstances. During the reporting period, 548 hygiene/dignity kits were distributed, benefitting 362 new individuals.

**ADAP:** To foster the engagement of young people from refugee and migrant communities in skills building activities, UNICEF identified partner organizations that play a crucial role in outreach to support the effective integration of young individuals into the UPSHIFT workshops, a transformative programme designed to equip young people with critical life and vocational skills, fostering innovation, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship.

150 youth (66 boys, 84 girls) from across Serbia participated in three UPSHIFT workshops in 2024. Under the guidance of mentors, with the support of translators and using the UPSHIFT methodology, they worked on innovative solutions addressing issues such as air pollution, lack of sports activities, and social cohesion projects. Ongoing mentoring and financial support will be provided to bring their initiatives to life.

The programme "I Support My Friend" was piloted and empowered young refugees and migrants by providing psychological support through peer networks. Based on the outcomes and identified needs, the peer support programme was translated into Serbian and adapted to better address the unique challenges faced by refugee and migrant youth. Publications on how to organize and implement peer support in a safe and reliable way were shared with relevant institutions.

Additionally, UNICEF organized a focus group with CSOs to better understand the needs and opportunities for reaching refugee and migrant youth. This included the exchange of data on the number of refugee and migrant youth outside of refugee centers, sharing outreach methods, and exploring further possibilities for collaboration.

**SBC, Community Engagement and AAP:** To improve the engagement of affected populations and ensure that they are at the centre of our work, UNICEF collected feedback from 343 beneficiaries which was addressed accordingly by the implementing partner Info Park and informed adjustments to the activities.

**Looking Ahead:** The government has requested UNICEF's support in enhancing the capacity of the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Migration (SCRM) and medical teams to provide timely care for refugee and migrant children and youth with non-communicable diseases, including mental health disorders, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and diabetes. This effort will involve establishing clear referral pathways for each condition and training staff to implement them effectively. Additionally, a comprehensive analysis of the most prevalent health issues will guide targeted interventions and ongoing improvements in healthcare delivery.

A focus area remains expanding access to MHPSS services for refugee and migrant children, adolescents, and parents. This includes outreach activities, group, and one-on-one support, and empowering adolescents with peer-to-peer psychological first aid skills. UNICEF will also work on improving information dissemination about services, supporting employability through skills building programmes, and fostering youth participation in volunteering and intercultural activities. A key initiative is establishing Local Volunteer Services in Sombor and Niš to support vulnerable groups, particularly refugees and migrants, through youth centers opened by the Ministry of Tourism and Youth.

UNICEF will continue supporting the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Improvement of Education in strengthening and improving teachers' capacities and school practice to ensure the quality and inclusive education of refugee and migrant children, enable individualized learning support, and foster children's well-being and integration in the multicultural school environment. Institute for Improvement of Education will extend the network of schools, developing a community of practice through horizontal exchange among schools, mentoring support, documenting practices, and teacher resources to encourage teachers to promote equality and respect for diversity in the school environment.

To further prioritize the protection of unaccompanied and separated children in collaboration with Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran, and Social Affairs and the SCRM, UNICEF will support the revision of the Standard Operating Procedure for the protection of unaccompanied and separated children, originally developed in 2016, to adapt it to the current context.

UNICEF was approached by the government to assist with winter support for children in reception centers, as well as unaccompanied and separated children in both centers and social institutions. UNICEF will procure and distribute essential basic non-food items to support these efforts.

## **BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA**

Between September and July 2024, 13,486 refugee and migrant arrivals were reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including 3,015 children and 2,640 unaccompanied and separated children. Arrival figures in 2024 (20,165) remained similar to the

same period last year.<sup>xii</sup> Main countries of origin were Syria, Afghanistan, Morocco, Egypt, and Türkiye.<sup>xiii</sup> Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is primarily a transit country, an approximate number of 1,500 people currently reside in temporary reception centers, operating at 35 percent capacity. At the border with Croatia, pushbacks, psychological and physical violence continued to be reported, including against children.<sup>xiv</sup>

**Health and Nutrition:** UNICEF continued its support for infant and young child feeding and counselling in Temporary Reception Centers (TRCs) through the operation of two Mother and Baby Corners (MBCs) dedicated to children under five and their parents or guardians. These MBCs provided a private space for breastfeeding, information dissemination, awareness campaigns on the benefits of breastfeeding, counselling on infant and young child feeding, and access to MHPSS, ensuring a secure environment for women. During the reporting period, in collaboration with partner World Vision, UNICEF reached 192 children (84 girls and 108 boys), including one child with disabilities, 165 mothers, 142 fathers and 6 pregnant women, offering health and nutrition services through MBCs in the TRCs Borici and Ušivak.

**Child Protection, GBViE and PSEA:** In collaboration with partners World Vision and the Centre for Social Welfare (CSW) in Sarajevo and Una-Sana Canton, UNICEF maintained 24/7 protection services for unaccompanied children and children in families. This comprehensive support included mental health and psychosocial assistance, legal guardianship, case management and the operation of a Child Friendly Space (CFS) in TRCs. During the reporting period, 3,015 children (149 girls and 2,866 boys) benefited from child protection services, with 2,640 being unaccompanied children. 239 children (12 girls and 227 boys) received case management support, while 381 children (151 girls and 230 boys) engaged in CFS activities, and 602 children (88 girls and 514 boys), including 345 unaccompanied and separated children, received MHPSS. 645 women, girls, and boys (out of which 152 girls and 369 boys) benefited from GBV risk mitigation, prevention, and response interventions.

UNICEF continued to lead child protection coordination through active working groups at the cantonal and national level. These coordination mechanisms ensured the exchange of updates and addressing key challenges. UNICEF is working on internal strategy and implementation through an action plan to strengthen the capacities of government partners in identifying solutions for the transfer of child protection services to institutions. Supporting materials were shared regarding the positioning of children in the transition process.

**Education and Skills Building:** UNICEF, in collaboration with World Vision, continued to offer non-formal education opportunities for children on the move. During the reporting period, 702 children (623 boys, 79 girls) engaged in various learning activities including foreign language learning through the Akelius Digital Language course, sport, creative workshops which was also provided in three primary schools attended by children on the move.

Literacy and local language classes were conducted, allowing children to explore topics such as the alphabet and pronouns in the host language. Furthermore, in partnership with the Ministry of Education in Una-Sana Canton and Canton Sarajevo, vocational training programmes for chefs, barbering, IT technology, and electrical work were provided. Most of the enrolled children were unaccompanied. Secondary schools were supported with equipment and relevant individual learning materials.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Education in Canton Sarajevo, a preparatory programme for children on the move continued in two primary schools in TRC Ušivak. Support was provided to facilitate children's integration into these preparatory programmes. Simultaneously, children in TRC Borici and TRC Ušivak received assistance with individual learning materials and information sharing to support their inclusion in preparatory programmes in Una-Sana Canton. UNICEF procured 500 school backpacks with learning supplies for children on the move.

**AAP/SBC:** UNICEF confirmed its participation in the UNICARE project which will ensure a fit-for-purpose solution for AAP, while also focusing on deployment of the different feedback communication channels in accordance with contextual needs and people's preferences, training of focal points and implementing partner staff.

UNICEF established a digital feedback and complaints channel utilizing InForm in reception centers Ušivak and Borici. Visibility and communication materials and merchandise with QR codes were distributed at service provision sites. During the reporting period, 665 people shared their concerns and provided feedback through established channels offline and online.

**Looking Ahead:** A transition to state-owned management is planned for 2025, but formal working group meetings have not yet been facilitated by the government and critical services for children face funding risks, especially after March 2025. UNICEF will need to continue to provide critical child specific services in the upcoming period, including 24/7 child protection and monitoring, legal guardianship, child friendly spaces, access to non-formal education and integration in regular classes, mother-baby corners, and critical non-food items which are at risk of being discontinued.

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<sup>xii</sup> Data from Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities. IOM data indicates a higher figure of 47,201 arrivals due to high turnover.

<sup>xiii</sup> Information based on Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, IOM, Ministry of Security.

<sup>xiv</sup> Danish Refugee Council, monthly factsheet: <https://pro.drc.ngo/resources/documents/border-monitoring-factsheet/> .

UNICEF aims to launch the UNICARE platform in November 2024, providing affected communities a channel to voice their opinions, concerns, provide feedback and request information through a sophisticated ticketing system. UNICEF will facilitate six capacity building events in AAP, inviting partners from developmental and humanitarian programmes.

## Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

UNICEF is committed to supporting vulnerable refugee and migrant children, adolescents, and families through a comprehensive approach alongside host governments. This support focuses on addressing gaps in child protection, education, health, nutrition, sanitation, hygiene, GBV prevention and response, and adolescent engagement. UNICEF strengthens national capacities and systems through partnerships with governments, United Nations agencies, NGOs, and CSOs to improve reception conditions and access to services across sectors.

Key actions include advocating for policies that align with international norms, enhancing child protection systems, preventing child immigration detention, promoting family unity, and fighting xenophobia and discrimination. UNICEF's response is aligned with the Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move and works in coordination with UNHCR and IOM under the Strategic Collaboration Framework, supporting the Global Compact on Migration and Refugees.

At regional level, UNICEF focuses on emergency preparedness, technical assistance, and promoting the best interest of the child, including for unaccompanied and separated children. These efforts are part of an integrated approach that benefits all refugee and migrant children and complements the Ukraine refugee response covered and reported under the [2024 Ukraine and Refugee Response HAC](#). UNICEF will work closely with the EU, its member and bordering states to ensure policies and their implementation are child-sensitive and protect children's rights, regardless of their countries or origin.

## Human Interest Stories and External Media

- UNICEF Greece Article: [A Network of Care for Unaccompanied Minors](#)
- UNICEF Italy Statement: [Shipwreck tragedy off the coast of Lampedusa kills three children](#)
- UNICEF Serbia Article: [Support for the Most Vulnerable Refugees and Migrants – Children and Women](#)
- UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina Article: [Bridging Worlds and Words](#)

Who to contact for further information:

**Regina De Dominicis**  
Special Coordinator/Regional Director UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia  
Email: [rdedominicis@unicef.org](mailto:rdedominicis@unicef.org)

**Octavian Bivol**  
Deputy Regional Director UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia  
Email: [obivol@unicef.org](mailto:obivol@unicef.org)

**Anmarie Swai**  
Regional Advisor Emergency UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia  
Email: [aswai@unicef.org](mailto:aswai@unicef.org)

## Annex A - SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME RESULTS (1 January – 30 September 2024)

Refugee & Migrant Response Humanitarian Performance Monitoring (HPM) Table					
Areas of Response	2024 Target	Total UNICEF Results	% Achieved	Increase from last SitRep	
<b>Health &amp; Nutrition</b>					
[H1] # children up to 15 years vaccinated against measles	50	34	68%	-	=
[H2] # children up to 6 years vaccinated against polio	50	8	16%	-	=
[NUT1] # of children/caregivers receiving IYCF counselling sessions through UNICEF supported mechanisms	2650	994	38%	506	▲
<b>WASH</b>					
[W3] # of population reached by critical hygiene and WASH supplies	1,900	713	38%	362	▲
<b>Child Protection</b>					
[CP1] # children and caregivers accessing mental health and psychosocial support	28,650	24,314	85%	5,916	▲
[CP2] # UASC identified	2,825	1,458	52%	620	▲
[CP3] # of UASC identified who were provided with alternative care or reunified	7,700	9,986	130%	4,199	▲
[CP4] # people with access to safe spaces, protection and support hubs	2,000	1,393	70%	687	▲
[CP6] # women, girls and boys accessing GBV risk mitigation, prevention and/or response interventions	33,860	8,941	26%	2,852	▲

[CP7] # people with safe and accessible channels to report sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers	59,320	32,298	54%	8,221	▲
[CP8] # of children who have received individual case management	6,220	3,432	55%	576	▲
<b>Education</b>					
[EDU1] # of children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning, through UNICEF-supported system-strengthening and programmes	31,300	38,941	124%	948	▲
[EDU2] # of children receiving learning materials	2,650	2,405	91%	771	▲
<b>Adolescent Development and Participation</b>					
[ADAP1] # of adolescent boys and girls benefitting from enhanced participation, social inclusion and empowerment	7,300	3,474	48%	721	▲
<b>SBC &amp; AAP</b>					
[SBC1] # people reached through messaging on prevention and access to services (including social protection, health, nutrition, education, etc)	470,000	635,950	135%	351,339	▲
[SBC2] # people participating in engagement actions for social and behavioural change	100,800	117,167	116%	110,734	▲
[SBC3] # of people sharing their concerns and asking questions through established feedback mechanisms	57,050	21,903	38%	2,420	▲

H2: Total results can only be updated in the end year report due to limited availability of government data.

CP1: High reach due to the online and offline modality of service provided

CP3: High reach due to increased arrivals of unaccompanied and separated children in BiH and technical support to the guardianship programme in Greece which provided support to all identified unaccompanied minors.

CP6: Lower reach due to decreased arrivals in Italy leading to a smaller target population than initially anticipated.

EDU1: High achievements due to increased arrivals in BiH and high reach in Greece under the ACE programme.

SBC1, SBC2: High reach due to improved implementation strategy in Italy.

## Annex B - FUNDING STATUS (as of 30 September 2024)

### Funding Status by Sector

Sector	Requirements	Funding available			Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2024	Other resources used in 2024	Resources available from 2023 (Carry-over)	US\$	%
Health and Nutrition	503,163	20,000	113,445	62,414	307,304	16%
Water Sanitation and Hygiene	55,000	20,000	0	0	35,000	64%
Child Protection, GBVIE and PSEA	15,910,747	1,705,290	1,047,120	2,328,137	10,830,200	68%
Education	5,618,426	1,073,144	602,347	3,794,515	148,421	3%
SBC and AAP	826,953	112,438	0	66,901	647,614	78%
Adolescents/Youth	2,664,337	302,461	0	342,168	2,019,708	76%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25,578,626</b>	<b>3,233,333</b>	<b>1,762,912</b>	<b>6,594,135</b>	<b>13,988,246</b>	<b>55%</b>

### Funding Status by Country

Countries	Requirements	Funds available			Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2024	Other resources used in 2024	Resources available from 2023 (Carry-over)	US\$	%
Greece	3,762,122	531,000	0	3,042,956	188,166	5%
Italy	16,094,611	1,607,212	0	2,708,854	11,778,546	73%
Bulgaria	1,879,593	45,396	7,249	552,604	1,274,344	68%
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2,330,000	549,725	1,755,663	34,924	-	0%
Serbia	1,512,300	500,000	0	254,797	757,503	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,578,626</b>	<b>3,233,333</b>	<b>1,762,912</b>	<b>6,594,135</b>	<b>13,988,246</b>	<b>55%</b>