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Solin, enjoys learning in the temporary reception center in Ušivak, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Refugee and Migrant Response in Europe

Humanitarian Situation Report No. 39



Situation in Numbers



21,550

Estimated # of arrivals in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in Q1 2021*



3,650

Estimated # of children among all Arrivals Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro in Q1 2021*



58,150

Estimated # of children present in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro*



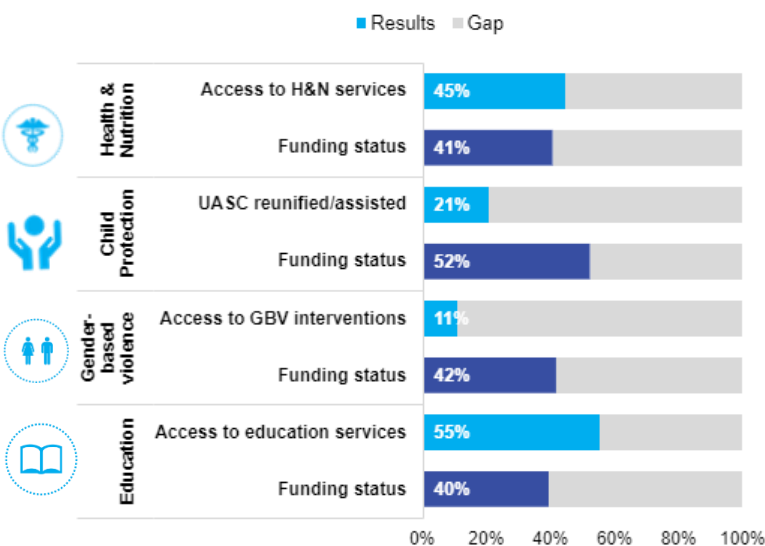
11,250

Estimated # of unaccompanied and separated children registered in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Reporting Period: 1 January to 31 March 2021

- Between January and March 2021, approximately 21,550 refugees and migrants* (over 17% children)** arrived in Europe. While arrivals drastically decreased in Greece (by 90%), Montenegro (64%) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (43%) compared to the same period in 2020, arrivals in Italy increased by approximately 170%, in Bulgaria (84%) and Serbia (41%).
- In Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro UNICEF support reached 5,483 children with child protection services, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), case management and referral, while over 14,887 attended formal and non-formal education activities. Around 2,846 women, girls and boys benefitted from gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response interventions.
- As the weather becomes warmer, transit by refugee and migrant population towards and within Europe is likely to increase. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its unprecedented consequences continues to severely impact the health, wellbeing and opportunities of refugees and migrants. In addition, pushbacks at borders and violence against refugees and migrants continue to be reported.
- In 2021, UNICEF has received USD 13.8 million out of a USD 36.4 million appeal. With an additional USD 10.6 million of carry-forward funding, a funding gap of 33 percent remains. UNICEF acknowledges and appreciates the generous contributions from all public and private sector donors to support the migrant and refugee crisis.

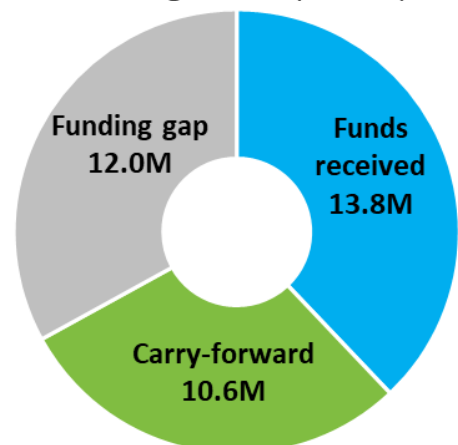
UNICEF's response and funding status



UNICEF Appeal 2021

US\$ 36,447,000

Funding Status (in US\$)



*UNICEF estimates based on the latest data available from the Greece National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), the Italy Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Bulgaria State Agency for Refugees, the Serbia Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Security, the Montenegro Ministry of Interior, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and non-governmental organizations. March figures for Greece not available yet.

**Percentage of children based on UNHCR data 'Operational Portal Refugee Situations: Mediterranean situation', <<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>>.

***Funding available includes funds received in the current year and carry-over from the previous year.

Funding Overview and Partnerships

By the end of March, UNICEF's [2021 Humanitarian Action for Children Appeal](#) (HAC) appeal for the Refugee and Migrant Response in Europe is 67 percent funded (\$24.4 million), including \$10.6 million carry forward from 2020, and \$13.8 million received in 2021.

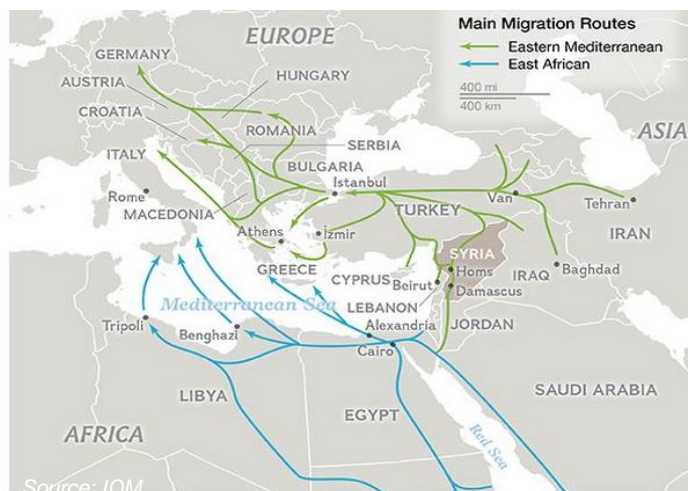
Since January, the European Union, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, UNICEF National Committees in Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Spain as well as Global Humanitarian Thematic funds, Global Social Inclusion Thematic funds have generously contributed to the UNICEF 2021 Refugee and Migrant response. UNICEF expresses its sincere gratitude to all public and private donors for the contributions received. The funding enabled UNICEF and partners to deliver direct services in the areas of health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), child protection, gender-based violence (GBV), education, youth empowerment and risk communication as well as support government-led COVID-19 response coordination mechanisms in all six countries.

With a significant number of children in refugee and migrant situations present in the six countries, around 58,150 children, including over 11,250 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) require sustained support to access critical services, without which they remain exposed to increased risk of GBV, abuse, trafficking and health related risks. The overall funding gap for the 2021 HAC stands at 33 percent, specific, significant gaps persist throughout countries and sectors with specific needs in accountability to affected population (AAP) and communication for development (C4D) (84%), education (60%), health and nutrition (59%) and GBV (58%). Montenegro (94%), Bulgaria (86%) and Serbia (76%) face the biggest funding gaps, while Italy and Bosnia and Herzegovina also remain significant at 62%.

UNICEF continues to invest in partnerships with UN agencies, international organizations, civil societies and faith-based organisations to advance shared goals of supporting children on the move and addressing xenophobia and racism. Close cooperation with UNHCR and IOM for effective emergency response, relocation, and country-specific initiatives are ongoing. Working directly with Parliaments, Ministries and EU institutions, UNICEF and partners develop and deliver unified and coordinated messages and policy positions, while also advocating for key child rights issues faced by children on the move.

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

New arrivals in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro between January and March 2021 are estimated at 21,550¹. Over 17%², 58,150, are children, including 11,250 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). Newly arrived populations are mainly from Tunisia (19.3%), Algeria (12.7%), Morocco (7.1%), Bangladesh (7%), Afghanistan (6%), Cote d'Ivoire (5.9%) and Syria (5.6%)³. Other declared countries of origin include Algeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Pakistan and Somalia.



With the arrival of spring and milder weather during the reporting period, movement within and between countries increased and is expected to do so further in the next few months. Some countries experiencing deteriorating COVID-19 epidemiological trends imposed new restrictions which added complexity and distress to the situation of refugees and migrants. These include restrictions on movement and quarantine measures that make it difficult for refugees and migrants to find or keep jobs. Access to protection, health, and education services and the provision of adequate WASH and non-food items remain challenges.

Summary Analysis of Programme Response

GREECE

Arrivals in the first two months of 2021 decreased by 90% compared to the same period last year, with 691 refugees and migrants arriving in Greece through sea and over land borders. The majority (403)⁴ arrived on the island of Lesbos. It is estimated 119,700 refugees and migrants are present in Greece, among whom 42,000 are children, including 3,854 UASC⁵.

¹ UNICEF estimates based on latest data available from Greece National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA), Italy Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Bulgaria State Agency for Refugees, Serbia Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry of Security, Montenegro Ministry of Interior, IOM, UNHCR) and non-governmental organizations. March figures for Greece not available yet.

² Estimation based on UNHCR, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.

³ UNHCR, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>.

⁴ Source: UNHCR, Aegean Arrivals weekly snapshot, 22-28 February.

⁵ Estimations based on data from UNHCR, UNICEF and the Greece National Centre for Social Solidarity (EKKA).

In January and February, 1,586 people were transferred from Reception and Identification Centres (RICs) on the Greek islands to second line reception facilities on the mainland. By the end of March, 11,265 refugees and migrants remained in the five RICs on the islands of Lesbos, Kos Chios, Leros and Samos. The Samos continues to be severely overcrowded – with 3,141 people residing in accommodations designed for 648.

COVID-19 continues to affect the movement of refugees and migrants and their access to basic services. The majority of Open Accommodation Sites (OAS) had imposed restrictions on movement in line with the ongoing national lockdown. As a result, children could not physically attend school. However, access to digital learning remains a challenge for many refugee and migrant children due to a lack of devices and internet connectivity. While the WASH programming is currently well funded, there remain significant funding gaps in health and nutrition (64%), gender-based violence (GBV) (58%), education (58%) and communication for development (C4D) (76%).

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF continues supporting mothers and their infants through Mother and Baby Care Centres (MBCs) in mainland Greece and on the islands. Support ranges from provision of breastfeeding counselling and capacity building of health professionals (nurses) joining the Child and Family Support Hub teams. Over the quarter, 698 women and 374 children received services through the MBCs.

Child Protection

Following the Government announcement ending the 21-year long practice of UASC protective custody in police stations countrywide, the number of UASC in protective custody dropped to 46 in mid-March (compared to 331 UASC in March last year).

UNICEF continues to support the ongoing voluntary scheme to relocate UASC from Greece to other European Union (EU) member states. In 2021, 144 UASC were successfully relocated – bringing the total to 717 relocations since the start of the scheme in 2020. Support continued to the 16 Child and Family Support Hubs in OAS on the Greek mainland as well as on the islands of Samos and Lesbos. While the needs in Lesbos continue to be significant, challenges persist in reaching the population in the Mavrovouni temporary RIC due to ongoing COVID-19 movement restrictions and the lack of dedicated spaces for child-focused activities within the site. During the reporting period, the UNICEF-supported Child and Family Support Hub in Lesbos (Tapuat Centre) continued to act as an emergency shelter for single mothers and their children as planned transfers have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing national lockdown.



Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Over 4,000 copies of a fictional teen story, “The World Anew”, along with the relevant facilitator guides for GBV activities (e.g., guided discussions, role play, videos, etc.) based on the book were distributed across all Greek high schools, in partnership with the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI). The guide provides teachers with support on how to deliver GBV prevention activities in the classroom and explain objectives, expected results, time and resources needed. UNICEF also supported the English translation of the first National Report on Violence Against Women.

Education and Skills Building

UNICEF continued to provide non-formal education (NFE) to refugee and migrant children (3-17 years old) in 13 OAS on the mainland and in facilities on the islands of Lesbos and Samos. In response to ongoing school closures due to COVID-19, UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Institute of Educational Policy 1,068 teachers, school principals, refugee education coordinators, and school counsellors were trained on methodologies and materials to support refugee and migrant students.

To ensure continuity of learning while face-to-face teaching was not possible, [online content](#) was developed for self-learning of Greek and English. In addition, numerous articles were developed, and a helpline was established (via Facebook) to provide accurate information on continuing education during lockdown. During the reporting period, 7,650 children were supported with student kits and self-learning materials.

The accelerated development of learning material has been finalized and a [website](#) was created to provide access to student material, glossaries, diagnostic tests, and guides for teachers. Around 500 copies of these materials are ready to be delivered to students whenever high schools re-open. In addition, an [e-learning platform](#) has been developed to provide Greek, English, and Math lessons in the refugee and migrant community.

Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

In partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), 54 tippy taps (hands-free handwashing devices) are being maintained at the Mavrovouni temporary RIC in Lesbos. Hygiene promotion and solid waste management teams, including community volunteers, also continued door-to-door outreach, disseminating information on practicing good hygiene to stay safe and prevent COVID-19 transmission. In coordination with the Government and the International

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and German Red Cross, UNICEF is working with implementing partners to provide safe, accessible, appropriate and durable toilets and hot showers across the RIC. Design of the overall system and tendering processes are completed, and work will start in early April.

Youth Empowerment/Participation

A capacity building programme for facilitators working with adolescent UASC, coordinated by the Special Secretariat for the Protection of Unaccompanied Minors, was implemented. 70 facilitators in shelters, Supported Independent Living (SILs) and Safe Zones were supported to deliver language courses combined with social-emotional learning goals.

ITALY

The first quarter of 2021 saw a high increase in arrivals (7,392) via the Mediterranean Sea, including 721 UASC, compared to the same period in 2020 (2,794). There are 6,632 UASC (mostly 16- and 17-year-olds) currently hosted at reception centres. As of February, unaccompanied and separated (UAS) girls accounted for 3.3% of this total population. However, because they are often not officially identified and registered, UAS girls receive inadequate attention and support. Increased numbers of arrivals put additional pressure on reception centers on the island of Lampedusa. Increased numbers of refugees and migrants transiting through the city of Ventimiglia at the Italy/French border made it difficult for reception and protection services to effectively respond to the additional needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdown measures have resulted in interruptions of classroom activities and shifts from in-classroom to online lessons. These shifts have impacted education and professional training for UASC and young refugees and migrants. Difficulties in following online due to language barriers contributed to a sense of demotivation. A recent U-Report poll showed that around three out of 10 young refugee and migrants were either unable to find work or lost their jobs due to COVID-19 restriction measures. UASC and young refugees and migrants at reception centres reported feeling more isolated now compared to when the first lockdown measures were imposed between March and May 2020. To adequately respond to needs, UNICEF is aiming to overcome funding gaps in health and nutrition (51%), child protection (84%), education (38%) and C4D (92%).

Health and Nutrition

In partnership with INTERSOS and Médecins du Monde (MdM), 1,233 migrants and refugees were reached through health screenings and triage and received hygiene items in critical locations (e.g., reception facilities, informal settlements, transit areas). Furthermore, a short video on immunization disseminated through the U-Report on the Move platform reached 549 adults and children.

Child Protection

UNICEF, in partnership with MdM and INTERSOS, reached 699 children and young refugees and migrants with child protection services, including psychosocial support (PSS), legal counselling, guardianship and mentorship, alternative care solutions and participation. 46 children and young migrants and refugees participated in PSS activities in selected reception facilities in Rome and Calabria. 69 children and young refugees and migrants outside of the formal reception system in Rome were reached with information on their rights, available services, and referral. In addition, 254 frontline workers and caregivers were trained on child protection principles and standards.

A foster care program for UASC was included in the pilot phase of the EU Child Guarantee in Italy. In consultations with line Ministries, the scope of the programme was extended to include vulnerable refugee and migrant families. As a result, 26 children were placed with foster families in Sicily, Lombardia, and Veneto. In addition, 79 potential foster parents and social workers were trained on the foster care system for UASC. UNICEF continued to support the guardianship system in Sicily, Abruzzo, Basilicata and Molise, providing training and support to 243 guardians. In partnership with Refugees Welcome, the mentorship programme has expanded its geographical scope to include Rome and Ravenna. 40 mentors were matched and 40 mentees and are receiving support through the programme.

In partnership with Associazione Ricreativa Culturale Italiana (ARCI), online legal counselling and PSS continued. As the service was integrated into U-Report on the Move, 118 U-reporters asked for legal support and orientation, while 20 cases were reached with PSS, including case management. Through three live chats, an estimated 530 people were reached with legal information, while video messages on mental health and promotion of online PSS reached 680 people. In partnership with Save the Children, 227 children and young refugees and migrants at the border in Lampedusa and Ventimiglia were reached with information, psychological first aid, and referral services.

Gender-based Violence

UNICEF and partners reached 397 young refugees and migrants with GBV prevention and response activities (22% girls, 6% boys, 65% women, 7% men). UNICEF provided case management, psychological and legal support through in-person and remote modalities to 274 GBV survivors and individuals at risk in Rome and Palermo. Mobile outreach teams operating in border areas referred 123 GBV survivors and individuals at risk to relevant services and provided key information.

UNICEF reached some 600 individuals with key information on GBV risks and access to services. Information provided through [12 Q&As on GBV](#), developed in seven languages, reached approximately 200 users. UNICEF launched a [social media campaign](#) focusing on the concept of consent. A petition to advocate with key institutions for the prompt renewal of the National Strategic Plan on Violence Against Women collected 30,000 signatures. During the campaign, a guideline highlighting eight actions to advance gender equality was disseminated through the UNICEF Italy website and social media channels.

UNICEF and partners enhanced the capacity of over 200 stakeholders and frontline workers through training on how to support GBV survivors. 23 Linguistic and Cultural Mediators (LCMs) were trained through an extensive online course based on the UNICEF-Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) capacity-building curriculum, [Supporting Survivors of Violence: The Role of Linguistic and Cultural Mediators](#).

UNICEF continued to generate knowledge on key issues affecting refugee and migrant women and girls and advocated with key stakeholders to advance their rights to safety and well-being, especially in the context of COVID-19. Through the GBV interagency collaboration, UNICEF, IOM and UNHCR are developing a massive open online course (MOOC) on the [GBV Pocket Guide](#).

Education and Skills Building

Seven Innovation & Creativity Camps for UPSHIFT were implemented online within secondary schools in Milan and Palermo, reaching 864 students. In catch-up schools in Rome and Milan, 145 young migrants and refugees completed the Basic Entrepreneurship Education course. Among them, 55 continued phase II "Ideas in Action for UPSHIFT", where 10 entrepreneurial ideas were conceived and presented in front of a multidisciplinary jury that provided feedback on how to continue to phase III of incubation. Specific Innovation & Creativity Camps were conducted in Naples and Taranto, involving 13 participants in a secondary school and a catch-up school, who developed ideas conceived in the UNICEF Italy project "NEET⁶ Equity". In Sicily, over 20 young Italians, migrants and refugees were involved in the active citizenship programme "UTOPIA", while 50 young people engaged in the first meeting of a public speaking course.

Youth Empowerment/Participation

U-Report scale up efforts were hampered by the worsening pandemic and constantly changing lockdown measures. Nonetheless, around 200 young migrants and refugees were registered on the U-Report on the Move platform through social mobilization sessions in reception centres, including 130 UASC, bringing the total number of U-reporters to 6,137. Despite ongoing challenges due to changes in Facebook policy, online activities continued through polling (eliciting young people's experiences and opinions on education, GBV and access to jobs), two live chats (on best interest of UASC and international protection requests), and videos providing mental health and health information in collaboration with UNHCR and ARCI, reaching approximately 420 U-reporters. Access to information was also strengthened with the launch of a weekly [podcast series](#), providing information on issues of concern to over 300 U-reporters.

Youth engagement in high level fora continued with participation of a U-Ambassador at the online Youth Migration Summit on 4 January 2021. Five active U-bloggers published 16 articles on the U-blogger website on topics ranging from the World Water Day and Health Day to the environmental impact of fast fashion, the situation of NEET young people during the pandemic, and awareness-raising on gender equality and sexual consent. A partnership was established with Futura Network – a spin-off of ASVIS, multi-stakeholder network whose newsletter on advocacy towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reaches more than 15,000 people.

Communication for Development (C4D), Community Engagement and Accountability to Affected Population (AAP)

3,834 people were reached through messaging on prevention and access to services. This included 2,728 individuals reached with child protection related information (e.g., accessing in-person and online services), live chats on legal issues (e.g., international protection and permits of stay in Italy). 138 individual queries on child protection were managed through the U-Report Platform Engagement actions for the promotion of social inclusion of young refugees and migrants reached 42,705 individuals, including through human impact stories. A [Valentine's Day campaign](#) promoting healthy relationships and the concept of consent, was promoted through UNICEF Italy's social media channels.

BULGARIA

Arrivals increased significantly in 2021 with 876 officially registered as of March, marking an over 84% increase compared to the same period in 2020 (144 persons). Such high numbers in a year's first trimester was last observed in 2013, just prior to a mass influx of refugee and migrants into the country. So far, 848 persons have applied for asylum in 2021, compared to 415 asylum seekers for the same period in 2020, marking an approximate increase of 49%. 248



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Women and Girls Safe Space, Sicily

⁶ Not in employment, education or training

(30%) of the asylum-seekers were children (aged 0-17 years). 73% (128) of these children were UASC⁷. Bulgaria has an 86% overall funding gap. Funds are lacking for programming in health and nutrition, education, C4D and youth empowerment, and serious gaps remain in GBV (80%) and child protection (57%).

Health and Nutrition

Through the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health (DG Health)-funded project "Strengthening refugee and migrant children's health status in Southern and South-Eastern Europe" which is improving access to health and nutrition services, UNICEF reached 262 infants, children, and mothers. UNICEF, in partnership with the Council of Refugee Women, Mission Wings Foundation and Caritas, provided health-related information sessions and services to groups in Sofia and Haskovo regions. In addition, case management for timely identification, referral to psychosocial support and life skills education were provided through recreational and non-formal services in safe environments. In total, UNICEF partners reached 103 children with increased access to general health check-ups and referrals, including access to life-saving vaccines, and 182 adults and children benefited from increased health literacy.

Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence

During the reporting period, three of the 17 UAS boys and young men living Greece who arrived in Bulgaria via the relocation scheme, turned 18 and were denied international protection by the State Agency for Refugees (SAR). UNICEF and partners launched an appeal against SAR's decision to the Court in Haskovo and are providing PSS to the three young persons. The remaining 14 children were granted protection and have been accommodated in a facility run by Sofia Municipality in Ovcha Kupel. UNICEF provided technical support for the children's integration plans, vocational training and guardianship agreements. UNICEF has been advocating for the establishment of specialised services for UASC, such as Supported Independent Living (SIL) and, in cooperation with UNICEF Greece, presented the final report of the initiative to the municipality.

Over this quarter in Sofia and Haskovo regions, UNICEF and partners reached 437 persons with GBV prevention and response services through group sessions and direct humanitarian assistance based on vulnerability assessments, case management, social assessments and plans of action. UNICEF reached 17 vulnerable women (including eight mothers) and 13 children aged up to three years old via a Mother and Baby unit in Sofia and access to health services, psychosocial consultations, support for improvement of parenting skills, employment consultations, studying the Bulgarian language and other interventions via crisis centre support. The Bulgarian Helsinki Committee provided legal aid and services to 120 UASC (2 girls, 118 boys) out of the total 182 newly registered asylum-seeking UASC.

Education and Skills Building

As most classes continue to be delivered online, refugee and migrant students challenged with significant knowledge and language gaps, face serious issues enrolling and/or returning to school. The overall school enrolment rate among asylum-seeking children has continued to be low: Out of a total of 252 asylum-seeking children reported by SAR as of 25 March 2021, 117 are enrolled and only 57 actually attend classes.

In Sofia and Harmanli, UNICEF in collaboration with Caritas, identified and referred 87 refugees and migrant population to PSS and life- skills education through recreational and non-formal services in safe, stimulating and inclusive environments of whom, 81 were children (50 boys, 31 girls), including 41 UASC (40 boys, one girl).

C4D, Community Engagement and AAP

Due to increased needs on health related awareness among refugees and migrants, UNICEF printed additional health awareness materials on immunization, breastfeeding and access to health services. Dissemination of the material will continue through implementing partners among refugees and migrants as part of the DG Health project.

SERBIA

Between January and March 2021, UNHCR registered 10,079 refugees and migrants arriving, including 135 UASC during the first two months, a 41% increase compared to 5,982 arrivals during the same period last year. Of the 4,460 refugees and migrants housed in asylum and reception centres at the end of March, 418 were children (295 boys, 123 girls) and 123 were UASC⁸. These numbers are near the maximum capacity of reception centres. In addition, 246 people requested asylum, the majority being men (189 cases), followed by 34 boys, 15 women and eight girls⁹.

In the last week of March, vaccinations against COVID-19 were opened to the refugee and migrant population, who, as a result of UNICEF's successful advocacy efforts, were included in the national immunization plan as a vulnerable group. Negotiations are ongoing for continued support through the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) Assistance framework measures (including protection, education, WASH, and food) which is coming to an end. This will impact the continuity of services, including timely identification and assessment of UASC, as well as the provision of assistance to other vulnerable groups.

With shrinking funds and limited donors, substantial funding gaps remain in most sectors, particularly WASH (100%), education (100%), GBV (98%), health and nutrition (90%). Limited resources pose challenges on ensuring quality and

⁷ SAR information as of 25th March 2021

⁸ Source: Commissariat for Refugees and Migration

⁹ Source: Ministry of Interior, Asylum Office

sustainable protection arrangements and guardianship services for UASC, as well as achieving further improvements in standards of accommodation for UASC. Access to online education for refugee and migrant children at compulsory, elementary school level and non-compulsory, secondary school level for adolescents (particularly UASC) has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Impediments also include the lack of translators and solutions appropriately tailored for adolescents.

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF provided access to Mother Baby Corner (MBC) related services (e.g., information on hygiene, breastfeeding, early child feeding, and referrals to specialized health services) in women and girls safe spaces at two locations.

UNICEF developed health literacy/awareness raising materials reaching 427 children and 667 caregivers in 18 reception and asylum centres. Materials include eight topics related to health services in Serbia (e.g., brochures on [Health Navigation](#), [Breastfeeding and Feeding of Young Children for Mothers on the Move](#), [Breastfeeding Safely During the COVID-19 pandemic](#), [Recommendations for Parents of Children from 1-6 Months of Age](#), [Recommendations for Parents of Children 7-24 Months of Age](#)). Materials were translated in up to six languages.

A comprehensive assessment on substance abuse and risky behaviours in refugee/migrant children and youth has been organized with the purpose of exploring the prevalence of alcohol and substance use and establishing a better understanding of the various socio-demographic and psychological correlations to inform efficient response and prevention services.

Child Protection

306 children were reached with child protection support and 123 UASC reunified with their primary caregiver or provided with alternative care services in five locations. In addition, UNICEF continues to co-coordinate the Child Protection Working Sub-Group together with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MoLEVSA) to ensure inter-sectoral collaboration and systems strengthening.

UNICEF worked on developing the interdisciplinary university course "*Protection of Children affected by Mixed Migration*" aimed at students of social work and active frontline workers engaged in the protection of the refugee and migrant population in Serbia. The course was developed and piloted in 2020, has now been accredited and integrated in the regular learning offered by the Faculty of Political Sciences at Belgrade University. The course will be further developed and linked to similar international initiatives.

Gender-Based Violence

UNICEF and partners continued to implement GBV prevention and response services (e.g., remote and in-person prevention and PSS for women and girls survivors or at risk of GBV) in four reception centres and at two additional locations in the greater Belgrade area. Support includes workshops, info-sessions, and individual consultation via hotline, safe referrals, and support to case management in GBV cases. Additionally, information on [GBV](#) has been developed and translated into multiple languages.

Education and Skills Building

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Commissariat for Refugees, UNICEF has implemented projects focused on access to non-formal education (NFE) opportunities via online language learning platform Akelius and purchase of digital equipment and formal education through additional learning support of mentors to children enrolled in schools in three reception and asylum centres. During the reporting period, 120 children were reached. Overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants encourages the extension of the project.

WASH and Basic Needs

Due to the ongoing pandemic and increased arrivals of refugees and migrants in 2021, additional gaps have emerged in the provision of basic hygiene and non-food items (NFIs). Active donors prioritized the intensified delivery of hygiene items to prevent the spread of the COVID-19. However, the needs for clothes and shoes remain insufficiently addressed. Between January and March 2021, UNICEF procured 578 packages of clothing and 300 pairs of shoes for refugee and migrant children below 14 years of age. As of the end of March, 300 refugee and migrant children were reached and the distribution of remaining supplies is in process. In addition, UNICEF and implementing partners have distributed critical supplies to support infection prevention protocols against the spread of COVID-19, particularly through the provision of dignity and hygiene kits which reached 828 women and children.



UNICEF /Shubuck/2021
A child receiving NFI in the reception centre

Youth Empowerment/Participation

UNICEF developed Information Communication and Education (IEC) materials to address issues faced by UASC, including "[How to Cope with Stress](#)" and "[How to Manage Anger](#)". Aiming to build skills of refugee and migrant youth, UNICEF provided vocational training for 23 UASC in asylum centres in Sjenica and Bogovadja. A partnership has been

established with a local NGO to implement skills-building programmes for youth on the move, This initiative facilitated communication between non-formal education providers, refugee and migrant children from Sjenica and Bogovadja Asylum Centres, and local industry. The programme provides opportunities for practical placements and allows youth to learn directly from local businesses.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Between January and March 2021, 2,462 new arrivals were registered, including 37 UASC, a decrease of 43% compared to 4,323 arrivals during the same period in 2020. The refugee and migrant population present in the country is estimated at 7,620, with 782 children (626 boys, 156 girls), including 460 UASC.

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) continues to see a high and rising number of COVID-19 cases, straining hospital capacity. 127 refugees and migrants as well as an increasing number of services providers in Temporary Reception Centres (TRCs) have tested positive. During the second half of March, health authorities ordered a total lockdown of TRCs in Borici, Sedra and Miral. All admissions and exits of refugees and migrants have been suspended further reducing already scarce accommodation capacities for vulnerable refugees and migrants, including UASC, in Una-Sana Canton.

A steep surge of onward movements has been recorded, with the improvement in weather likely a contributing factor. In the last two weeks of March in Una-Sana Canton alone, 533 arrivals were recorded from Usivak and Blazuj TRCs in Sarajevo Canton and from neighbouring countries. Restrictions imposed on the transportation of refugees, migrants and asylum-seekers in Una-Sana Canton including families with children and UASC, remain a serious concern. According to IOM, there are at least 1,750 persons outside TRCs, living in precarious conditions in makeshift tent settings or residing in abandoned facilities in Sarajevo, Tuzla and Una-Sana Cantons.

The Ministry of Security approved a new TRC at the former Lipa site, with a capacity of approximately 1,500 persons of which around 200 places are reserved for UASC and 300 for families with children. Although the turnover rate is high, there are currently, some 700 to 1,000 refugees and migrants who remain sheltered in military tents in the Lipa provisional camp.

With increasing humanitarian needs, the existing funding gaps in WASH (100%), youth empowerment (100%), education (88%), and child protection (50%), pose challenges to scaling up the response.

Health and Nutrition

UNICEF and partners continue to provide health and nutrition support, benefitting 798 children as of March. Paediatric healthcare services, including health check-ups, pre-school medical examinations, and individual counselling on overall health and immunization, were provided in Borici and Sedra. Four MBCs provided parents and pregnant women with infant and young child feeding (IYCF) counselling, information and awareness raising on hygiene and prevention of COVID-19, psychosocial counselling, and supported the provision of food and critical hygiene packages. A total of 129 parents and 134 children benefitted from MBC services so far.

Child Protection



UNICEF and partners continued to operate Child-friendly Spaces (CFS) and 24/7 child protection teams in four TRCs, including in designated zones for UASC. An estimated 1,068 children on the move benefited from child protection support and 518 UASC benefited from care and protection in designated zones for UASC in TRCs. In partnership with MDM, UNICEF ensured access to mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS) for children and their caregivers in all TRCs in Una-Sana Canton. UNICEF facilitated child protection monitoring within and outside of TRCs to ensure timely identification of UASC sleeping rough.

Education and Skills-Building

UNICEF continued to support the MoE in Una-Sana Canton in enrolling refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children into public schools. Between January and March, 216 children were enrolled in five primary schools. They were also able to attend online classes introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. UNICEF and partners provided daily non-formal education activities in TRCs, including basic subjects, IT classes, creative and sports activities, and English language classes through the Akelius Digital Language course, using a blended learning method which reached 383 children. UNICEF continued to disseminate positive stories and advocacy messages about the importance of education for all children.

MONTENEGRO

In 2021, Montenegro recorded 426 new arrivals (274 men, 53 women, 57 boys and 42 girls) which included an increase in the number of families with children. However, compared to the same period in 2020, when 1,186 arrivals were registered, the number decreased by 64%. A trend towards longer stays in reception facilities has been recorded in recent months – in 2020 the duration was one to maximum three days, while in 2021 this increased to over seven days.

Existing systemic challenges coupled with COVID-19 restrictions posed obstacles in the provision of support and protection to an increasing number of children, especially given their longer stay in reception facilities. Limited number

of staff, the need to improve the knowledge and competences of relevant staff, and the lack of clothing and sanitation for children are key concerns. Health care provision challenges are linked both to the legislative framework and the established practices.

Based on the follow-up recommendations from the 2020 Rapid Needs Assessment of Refugee and Migrant Children, UNICEF provided support to strengthen institutional capacities to better meet the needs of children and families for nutrition, health care, child protection and GBV. So far, only 6% of the funding requirement has been met which leaves significant gaps in all response sectors.

Child Protection and Gender-Based Violence

In March 2021, in coordination with the Ministry of Interior, and in cooperation with IOM and UNHCR, UNICEF delivered a three-day online training entitled "Protection of migrant, asylum-seeking, and refugee children: coordination, multisectoral approach, case management and international standards on child protection." The training objectives included improving child protection within the migration management and enhancing the overall protection of migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee children and their families. The training was provided to 24 representatives of institutions and organizations relevant for migration management, primarily front-line workers and social welfare professionals.

Two more trainings on GBV prevention and response and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) for frontline workers and access to quality health services for children, child immunization, nutrition and breastfeeding for health professionals will be organized during April and May 2021.

Due to higher influx of migrant and refugee children in recent months and on request from Ministry of Interior, UNICEF supported to provision of additional supplies for child friendly spaces in the new reception Centre in Bozaj.

Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Strategy

In 2021, UNICEF continues to work with other United Nations agencies and civil society organizations to strengthen government systems and capacities to respond to the needs of refugees and migrants in Greece, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. UNICEF's response prioritizes protection for children and women, the end of child immigration detention, family unity, unhindered access to health and education services, improving reception conditions and the fight against xenophobia and discrimination, in line with the Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move¹⁰. The response complements the global compacts on migration and refugees and promote effective scale-up models.

In all countries, UNICEF delivers direct services in the areas of health, nutrition, WASH, education, child protection, GBV and risk communication and joined government-led COVID-19 response coordination mechanisms. Furthermore, UNICEF provides technical support and expertise to relevant stakeholders to strengthen the child protection system and safeguard the rights of refugee and migrant children. In this context, UNICEF engages in advocacy with governments and partners to strengthen capacities to absorb and integrate refugee and migrant children into national systems.

Human Interest Stories and External Media

- UNICEF article: [You can do anything you want if you believe in yourself | UNICEF Serbia](#)
- UNICEF article: [Life-saving support during a pandemic - UNICEF and the Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria support a vulnerable woman, victim of violence and her child](#)
- UNICEF article: [With the support of UNICEF, the frontline workers of the Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria help women and children, survivors of violence find solutions for a better life](#)
- UNICEF article: [A refugee girl with a talent for languages and a serious sweet tooth](#)
- UNICEF article: [The Place of Love and Refuge](#)
- UNICEF article: [Adil: Six thousand kilometres and counting](#)
- UNICEF article: [Greek photographer, Angelos Tzortzinis, receives award of "Photography of the Year 2020"](#)
- UNICEF article: [Safeguarding health in a crisis: a snapshot from Greece](#)

Next SitRep: 21 July 2021

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¹⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/media/62986/file>

Annex A

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME RESULTS - as of 31 March 2021

SUMMARY OF RESULTS		Target 2021	Total Results
HEALTH AND NUTRITION			
# of infants, children and mothers accessing health and nutrition services, including in mother and baby care centres	Greece	3,000	1,072
	Serbia	450	86
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,200	927
# children benefitting from increased access to general health checks and referrals, incl. access to life-saving vaccines	Greece	15,000	0
	Italy	1,500	35
	Bulgaria	350	103
	Serbia	300	0
	Bosnia and Herzegovina ¹¹	300	737
	Montenegro ¹²	50	547
# women, girls, men and boys benefiting from increased health literacy	Italy	5,000	1,446
	Serbia ¹³	500	1,094
	Bulgaria	250	182
# of parents/caregivers of children under 5 receiving ECD counselling and/or parenting support	Serbia	200	54
	Montenegro	50	10
# of caregivers and frontline professionals (healthcare, social workers, teachers) provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Serbia	100	0
WASH and BASIC SUPPLIES			
# of children receiving culturally appropriate basic supplies, including clothes, baby hygiene items, dignity kits	Bulgaria	1,265	204
	Serbia	2,000	801
	Bosnia and Herzegovina ¹⁴	1,500	1,548
# of people reached with critical WASH supplies (including hygiene items) and services	Greece	8,500	3,022
CHILD PROTECTION			
# of children reached with quality child protection support (MHPSS, legal counselling and case management) and protection standards	Greece (R/M)	31,000	3,449
	Greece (Host)	5,000	0
	Italy	2,000	484
	Serbia	1,100	306
	Montenegro	150	84
	Bulgaria	200	92
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5,000	1,068
# of unaccompanied and separated children reunified with their primary caregiver or provided with family-based care/alternative care services	Greece	5,000	1,027
	Italy	500	17
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2,000	518
	Serbia	600	123
# of frontline workers and caregivers with improved knowledge and skills on child protection	Greece	650	385
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	300	0
	Italy	1,500	254
	Bulgaria	50	6
	Montenegro	30	24
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE			
# women, girls and boys accessing GBV risk mitigation, prevention or response intervention	Greece (R/M)	11,800	1,948
	Greece (Host)	10,000	0
	Italy	1,000	396
	Serbia	1,500	386
	Montenegro	70	0
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,000	1
	Bulgaria	200	115
	Greece	850	210
# of frontline workers with improved knowledge and skills on GBV prevention and response	Italy	600	135
	Serbia	100	22
	Bulgaria	75	22
	Montenegro	30	0
	Greece	6,000	166
# of women, girls, men and boys (including refugee, migrants and host community) receiving information on GBV, available services and how to access them	Montenegro	1,000	0
	Serbia	4,000	1,649
	Bulgaria ¹⁵	500	322
	Italy	20,000	601
EDUCATION			

¹¹ No of health checks and referrals among children significantly increased due to lock down of three Temporary Reception Centres for refugees/migrants families n due to the spread of COVID-19 in the centres (224 tested positive in March 2021, including 18 children and service providers)

¹² Result overachieved due to increased number of families with children Q1 and increase in duration of stay in Montenegro in 2021

¹³ Overreaching is due to additional health literacy materials that have been developed and disseminated after the target was originally set to address additional gaps

¹⁴ During Q1, large quantities of winter NFIs were produced and distributed, in addition to some donations received and also some NFIs procured last year 2020

¹⁵ This Q1 2021 is one of the 2 last quarters of GBV programme funded by the BPRM CO scaled up the interventions on GBV. Beneficiaries were reached via the mother and baby units, the drop-in centers in Sofia and Harmanli, including social media and telephone

SUMMARY OF RESULTS		Target 2021	Total Results
# children accessing formal or non-formal education, including early learning	Greece	22,000	13,352
	Italy	2,750	877
	Bulgaria	300	81
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,050	417
	Serbia	800	160
# of formal school teachers trained on at least one key theme on inclusion of refugee and migrant children	Montenegro	50	0
	Greece	1,500	671
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	50	0
YOUTH EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION			
# of adolescent boys and girls benefitting from enhanced participation, social inclusion and empowerment	Greece	5,000	668
	Italy	8,000	162
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	1,000	216
	Bulgaria	500	12
	Serbia	300	23
COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATION			
# of people reached through messaging on access to services	Greece (R/M)	30,000	0
	Greece (Host)	15,000	0
	Italy	135,000	3,834
	Bulgaria	2,200	300
	Montenegro	1,000	0
# people participating in engagement actions (for social and behavioral change)	Italy	140,000	42,705
# people sharing their concerns and asking questions/clarifications to address their needs through established feedback mechanisms	Italy	1,000	138

Annex B

FUNDING STATUS

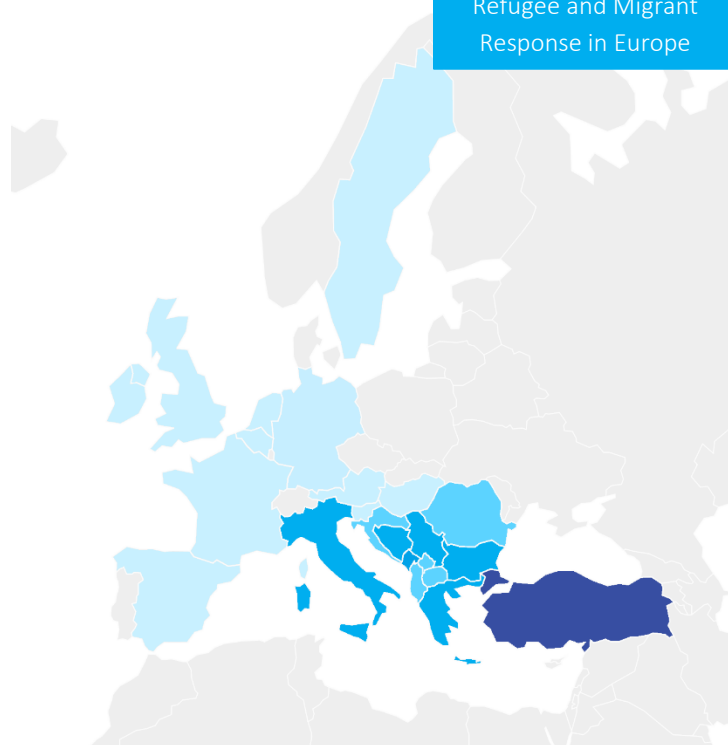
Country	Requirements	Funds available			Funding gap	
		Humanitarian resources received in 2021	Other resources used in 2021	Resources available from 2020 (Carry-over)	US\$	%
Greece	19 500 000	1 993 928	9 831 599	7 377 914	296 559	2%
Italy	6 935 000	725 713	0	1 930 786	4 278 501	62%
Bulgaria	1 145 000	0	0	159 792	985 208	86%
Serbia	1 550 000	25 492	0	346 274	1 178 234	76%
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5 150 000	300 000	942 022	715 217	3 192 761	62%
Montenegro	217 000	0	0	12 489	204 511	94%
Regional Support	1 950 000	0	0	54 352	1 895 648	97%
Total	36 447 000	3 045 133	10 773 621	10 596 824	12 031 422	33%

UNICEF Refugee and Migrant Response Activities in Europe

Updated April 2021



- Advocacy
- Communication
- Training and capacity building
- Outreach to children at risk
- Psycho-social support
- Gender-based violence
- Education
- Health and nutrition
- Water, hygiene and sanitation
- Adolescents
- Child rights monitoring
- Basic supplies
- Technical assistance
- Coordination and preparedness



Greece

Italy

Bulgaria

Serbia

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Montenegro

Preparedness countries*

National Committee countries

Turkey

In Turkey, UNICEF is responding to the needs of over 1.7 million Syrian and other refugee and migrant children through a multi-sectoral response under the Regional Response and Resilience Plan (3RP).

* In some countries, UNICEF may be supporting service provision on needs basis as part of the regular country programme.

UNICEF Refugee and Migrant Response Partners in Europe

Updated April 2021



- Child protection and/or GBV prevention and response
- Education
- Health and nutrition
- WASH and basic supplies
- Technical assistance

Greece	Bulgaria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solidarity Now, Arsis Thessaloniki, Arsis, CRWI DIOTIMA, Elix, Iliaktida, IRC Hellas, Lesvos Solidarity, Melissa, Merimna, METAdrasi, Syn-eirmos, Terre de Homme Hellas, KETHI Solidarity Now, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Arsis, Elix, Hellenic Adult Education Association, Iliaktida, METAdrasi, National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, University of Thessaly EKKA, Ministries for Labour, Migration, Education, Deputy Ombudswoman for Children, General Secretariat for Gender Equality, Institute of Educational Policy, Public Prosecutor's Office, national authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bulgarian Helsinki Committee, Animus Association Foundation, Alliance for Protection from Gender-Based Violence, Nadja Center Foundation, Mission Wings Foundation, Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria, Caritas, Bulgarian Red Cross Bulgarian Red Cross State Agency for Refugees
Italy	Serbia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Médecins du Monde, INTERSOS, CNCA, Centro Penc, Refugees Welcome, ARCI, Save the Children, Associazione Agevolando ODV, Borgo Ragazzi don Bosco, Clinica Legale per I Diritti Umani Cledu Aps INTERSOS, Junior Achievement-Italy, CNR-ITD, ARCI, Arciragazzi Nazionale Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the National Ombudsperson, SIPROIMI, local authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Info Park, University of Belgrade, DRC Info Park, Indigo ARDA Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Save the Children, World Vision, LAN, Centres for Social Welfare in Bihac, Cazin, Velika Kladusa, Kljuc, Hadzici Médecins du Monde, Church World Service Fenix, Danish Refugee Council Fenix Government authorities at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education