

THE BALKAN ROUTE

The Western Balkan Route is one of the main migratory pathways into Europe. Since mid-2018, transit corridors from Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Serbia, as well as through Albania and Montenegro, via Bosnia and Herzegovina, became one of the most travelled mixed migration routes in the Western Balkans.

Today, the route continues to be the most active in the European Union, recording 15,900 attempted crossings in the month of August alone, 141% more than in 2021.

86,000 irregular border crossings were registered in the first eight months of 2022, three times more than in 2021 and ten times more than in the same period in 2019. The main countries of origin are Syria, Afghanistan, and Turkey, although there are also repeated crossing attempts by migrants who are already present in the Western Balkans. A particular increase has been recorded on the route through North Macedonia and, most of all, Serbia.

Migrants and refugees stuck along the Balkan Route suffer arbitrary pushbacks and are also at risk of exploitation and human trafficking, while being in desperate need of adequate shelter, warm clothes, nutritious food and medical assistance.

For further information:

Institutional Websites and NGOs

European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Report on Migration and Asylum

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/com_2022_740_1_en_act_part1_v4.pdf

European Commission, 2022 Report on migration and asylum: Q&A

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_22_5986

Frontex, EU's external borders in July: increased number of crossings on the Central Mediterranean

<https://frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/eu-s-external-borders-in-july-increased-number-of-crossings-on-the-central-mediterranean-vCtsyr>

UNHCR ODT, Western Balkans - Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in mixed movements

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/89820>

UNHCR Operational Portal, South Eastern Europe

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/southeasterneurope>

IOM_ Migrant Presence Outside Temporary Reception Centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina

<https://reliefweb.int/report/bosnia-and-herzegovina/migrant-presence-outside-temporary-reception-centres-bosnia-and-3>

UNHCR: South Eastern Europe - Refugees, asylum-seekers and other people in mixed movements

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/86583>

Danish Refugees Council, Bosnia Herzegovina Country Facts

<https://drc.ngo/our-work/where-we-work/europe/bosnia-and-herzegovina/>

Caritas Bosnia and Herzegovina raises alarm over plight of migrants in the country

<https://www.caritas.org/2021/01/plight-of-migrants-in-bosnia/>

Caritas Ambrosiana, Covid-19 and Balkan Route

<https://www.caritasambrosiana.it/internazionale/est-europa/covid-e-la-rotta-balciana>

Online Newspapers and Periodicals

InfoMigrants, Migrants warned of dangers of landmines on Balkan route

<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/34243/migrants-warned-of-dangers-of-landmines-on-balkan-route>

InfoMigrants, Why has the Balkan migrant route become more active again?

<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/43691/why-has-the-balkan-migrant-route-become-more-active-again>

VATICAN NEWS_ Pope shows solidarity with refugees in Bosnia-Herzegovina

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2021-07/pope-shows-solidarity-with-refugees-in-bosnia-herzegovina.html>

SANT'EGIDIO_ A new humanitarian mission in Bihać, to meet refugees of the "Balkan route"

<https://www.santegidio.org/pageID/30284/langID/en/itemID/43253/A-new-humanitarian-mission-of-Sant-Egidio-in-Biha%C4%87-to-meet-refugees-of-the-Balkan-route.html>

VATICAN NEWS_ Hundreds of migrants stranded in Bosnia in freezing weather

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2020-12/bosnia-migrants-border-croatia-camp-fire-relocation-humanitarian.html>

Mediterranean Hope launches new Evangelical Church Project with Ipsia-Acli in the Balkans

<https://www.ipsia-acli.it/it/notizie/item/527-al-via-la-collaborazione-con-la-fcei-per-l-ipa.html>

Caritas Ambrosiana_ Bosnia, canteen for Lipa migrants under construction

<https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/30256/bosnia-canteen-for-lipa-migrants-under-construction>

La Diocesi di Novara in aiuto dei seicento migranti bloccati in Bosnia

<https://www.lastampa.it/novara/2021/02/15/news/la-diocesi-di-novara-in-aiuto-dei-seicento-migranti-bloccati-in-bosnia-1.39905122>

Caritas sends firewood to help migrants stuck in Bosnian blizzard

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2021-01/caritas-sends-firewood-migrants-lipa-bosnia-blizzard.html>

La testimonianza di padre Stanko Perica, gesuita croato, direttore generale del Jrs Europa Sud Est

<https://www.agensir.it/europa/balceni/2021/02/18/rotta-balcenica-oltre-duecento-minori-viaggiano-soli-la-dura-vita-dei-bambini-migranti-in-attesa-del-game/>

Pope Francis sent a Donation for Migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina

<http://www.sarajevotimes.com/168848-2/>